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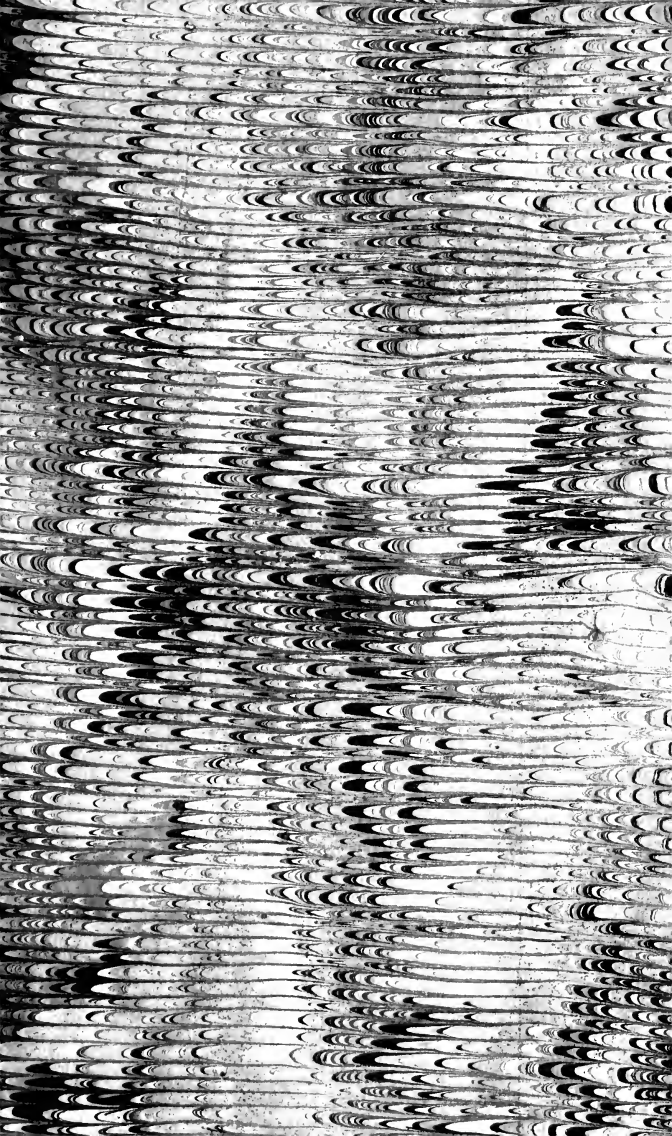
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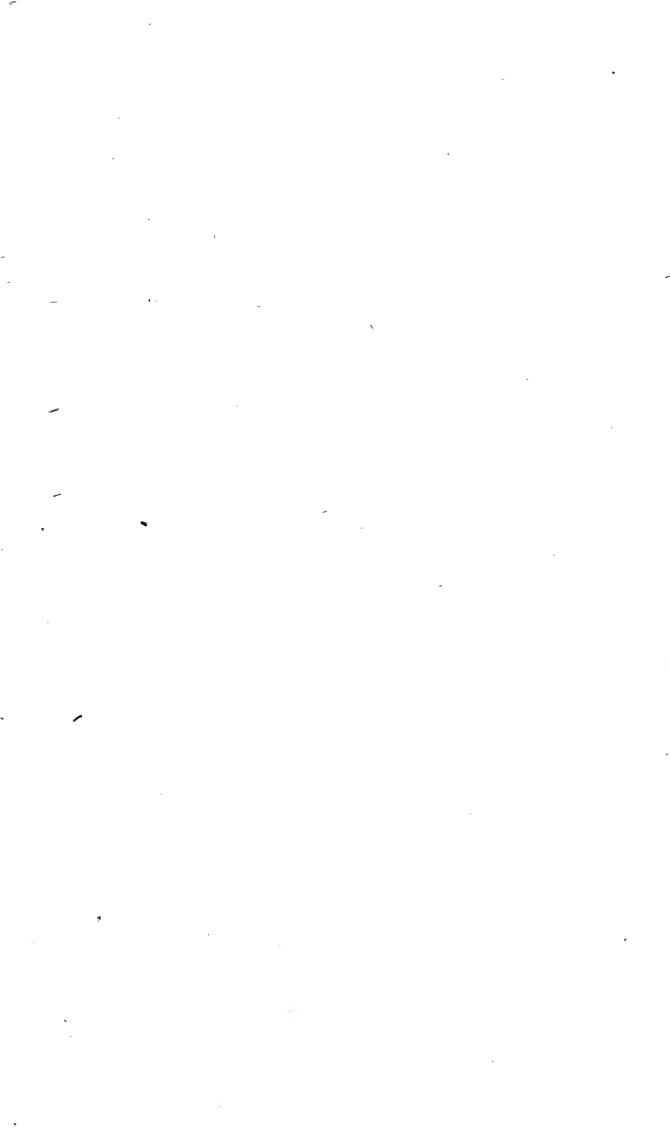
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THE
CHRISTIAN CORRESPONDENT.

THE
CHRISTIAN CORRESPONDENT:
LETTERS,

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL,

BY

EMINENT PERSONS OF BOTH SEXES;

EXEMPLIFYING THE

FRUITS OF HOLY LIVING, AND THE BLESSEDNESS
OF HOLY DYING.

WITH A PRELIMINARY ESSAY BY

JAMES MONTGOMERY, ESQ.

"His letters," say they, "are weighty and powerful.—Such as we are in word, by letters when we are absent, such will we be also in deed when we are present."—2 Cor. x. 10, 11.

IN THREE VOLS.

VOL. III.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR WILLIAM BALL,

ALDINE CHAMBERS,

PATERNOSTER ROW.

1837.

LONDON :
JOSEPH RICKERBY, PRINTER,
SHERBOURN LANE.

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PART VI.

LETTERS OF ADVICE, EXPOSTULATION,
REPROOF, &c.

PART VI.

LETTERS OF ADVICE, EXPOSTULATION, REPROOF, &c.

SECTION I.

LETTERS OF A MORE GENERAL CHARACTER UNDER THIS HEAD.

LETTER CCCI.

Noble letter of **QUEEN ANN BOLEYN** to **HENRY VIII.**, shortly
before her execution.

SIR,

YOUR grace's displeasure and my imprisonment are things so strange unto me, as what to write, or what to excuse, I am altogether ignorant: whereas you send unto me (willing me to confess a truth, and so to obtain your favour) by such an one whom you know to be mine ancient professed enemy, I no sooner received this message by him, than I rightly conceived your meaning; and if, as you say, confessing a truth indeed may procure my safety, I shall with all willingness and duty perform your command.

But let not your grace ever imagine that your poor wife will be ever brought to acknowledge a fault, where not so much as a thought thereof proceeded. And to speak a truth, never prince had wife more loyal in all duty, and in all true affection, than you have ever found in Ann Boleyn, with which name and place I could willingly have contented myself, if God, and your grace's pleasure had been so pleased. Neither did I at any time so far forget myself in my exaltation, or received queenship, but that I always looked for such an alteration as now I find; for the ground of my preferment being on no surer foundation than your grace's fancy, the least alteration, I knew was fit and sufficient to draw that fancy to some other subject. You have chosen me, from a low estate, to be your queen and companion, far beyond my desert or desire. If then you found me worthy of such honour, good your grace, let not any light fancy, or bad counsel of mine enemies, withdraw your princely favour from me; neither let that stain, that unworthy stain of a disloyal heart towards your good grace, ever cast so foul a blot on your most dutiful wife, and the infant princess your daughter; try me, good king, but let me have a lawful trial, and let not my sworn enemies sit as my accusers and judges; yea, let me receive an open trial, for my truth shall fear no open shame; then shall you see, either mine innocence cleared, your suspicion and conscience satisfied, the ignominy and slander of the world stopped, or my guilt openly declared. So that whatsoever you or God

may determine of me, your grace may be freed from an open censure; and mine offence being so lawfully proved, your grace is at liberty both before God and man, not only to execute worthy punishment on me, as an unlawful wife, but to follow your affection, already settled on that party, for whose sake I am now as I am, whose name I could some good while since have pointed unto; your grace being not ignorant of my suspicion therein.

But, if you have already determined of me, and that not only my death, but an infamous slander must bring you the enjoying of your desired happiness; then I desire of God, that he will pardon your great sin therein, and likewise mine enemies, the instruments thereof; and that he will not call you to a strict account of your unprincely and cruel usage of me, at his general judgment-seat, where both you and myself must shortly appear, and in whose judgment I doubt not (whatsoever the world may think of me) mine innocence shall be openly known and sufficiently cleared.

My last and only request shall be, that myself may only bear the burthen of your grace's displeasure, and that it may not touch the innocent souls of those poor gentlemen, who (as I understand) are likewise in strait imprisonment for my sake. If ever I have found favour in your sight; if ever the name of Ann Boleyn hath been pleasing in your ears, then let me obtain this request; and I will so leave to trouble your grace any further, with mine earnest prayers to the Trinity, to have your grace in his good keeping, and to direct you

in all your actions. From my doleful prison in the Tower this 6th of May.

Your most loyal and ever faithful wife,

ANN BOLEYN.

LETTER CCCII.

ARCHBISHOP USHER, on behalf of a poor man, to an oppressive NOBLEMAN.

I am much ashamed to receive such petitions against you. Have you never read, that the unrighteous, and he that doeth wrong, shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Think there is a God who heareth the cry of the poor, and may bring a rot upon your flocks, and curse every thing you put your hand to. And, if you think not of him, because you see him not (although he sees you through and through) yet believe your own eyes, and consider that he hath appointed his deputies upon earth, the higher powers, which will not suffer the poor to be oppressed by you or those that are greater than you. For shame, therefore, give content to this petitioner, that you hear not of this in a place where your face must blush, and your ears tingle at the hearing of it.

J. A.

LETTER CCCIII.

Letter of LADY RACHEL RUSSELL to DEAN TILLOTSON, urging him, in compliance with the king's desire, to accept the archbishopric.

About the middle of October, 1690.

Your letters will never trouble me, Mr. Dean ; on the contrary, they are comfortable refreshments to my, for the most part, overburdened mind, which both by nature and by accident, is made so weak, that I cannot bear, with that constancy I should, the losses I have lately felt. I can say, " friends and acquaintances thou hast hid out of my sight," but I hope it shall not disturb my peace. These were young, and as they had begun their race of life after me, so I desired they might have ended it also. But happy are those whom God retires in his grace:—I trust these were so ; and then no age can be amiss : to the young it is not too early, nor to the aged too late. Submission and prayer is all we know that we can do towards our own relief in our distresses, or to disarm God's anger, either in our public or private concerns. The scene will soon alter to that peaceful and eternal home in prospect. But in this time of pilgrimage, vicissitudes of all sorts are every one's lot. And this leads me to your case, sir.

The time seems to be come that you must put anew in practice that *submission*,⁽¹⁾ you have so

(1) This alludes to his letter to Lord Russell a little before his death, on the subject of *non-resistance*.

powerfully both tried yourself, and instructed others to : I see no place to escape at ; you must take up the cross and bear it : I faithfully believe it has the figure of a very heavy one to you, though not from the cares of it ; since, if the king guesses right, you toil more now ; but this work is of your own choosing, and the dignity of the other is what you have bent your mind against, and the strong resolve of your life has been to avoid it. Had this even proceeded to a vow, it is, I think, like [that of] the virgins' of old, to be dissolved by the father of your country. Again, though contemplation, and a few friends well chosen, would be your grateful choice, yet, if charity, obedience, and necessity call you into the great world, and where enemies encompass round about, must not you accept it ? And each of these, in my mean apprehension, determines you to do it. In short, it will be a noble sacrifice you will make, and I am confident you will find as a reward, kind and tender supports, if you do take the burden upon you : there is, as it were, a commanding Providence in the manner of it. Perhaps I do as sincerely wish your thoughts at ease as any friend you have, but I think you may purchase that too dear ; and, if you should come to think so too, they would then be as restless as before.

Sir, I believe you would be as much a common good as you can ; consider how few of ability and integrity this age produces. Pray do not turn this matter too much in your head : when one has once turned it every way, you know that more does but perplex, and one never sees the clearer for it. Be

not stiff if it be still urged to you. Conform to the Divine will, which has set it so strongly into the other's mind, and be content to endure ; it is God calls you to it. I believe it was wisely said, that when there is no remedy they ⁽¹⁾ will give it over, and make the best of it, and so I hope no ill will terminate on the king ; and they will lay up their arrows, when they perceive they are shot in vain at him or you, upon whom no reflection that I can think of can be made that is ingenuous ; and what is pure malice you are above being affected with.

I wish, for many reasons, my prayers were more worthy, but such as they are, I offer them with a sincere zeal to the throne of grace for you in this strait, that you may be led out of it, as shall best serve the great ends and designs of God's glory.

LETTER CCCIV.

WILLIAM PENN to his WIFE and CHILDREN. Farewell
counsel on his leaving England.

Worminghurst,
Fourth of Sixth month, 1682.

MY DEAR WIFE AND CHILDREN,

My love, which neither sea, nor land, nor death itself can extinguish or lessen toward you, most endearedly visits you with eternal embraces, and will abide with you for ever ; and may the God of my life watch over you and bless you, and do you

(¹) His enemies.

good in this world and for ever ! Some things are upon my spirit to leave with you in your respective capacities, as I am to one a husband, and to the rest a father, if I should never see you more in this world.

My dear wife ! remember thou wast the love of my youth, and much the joy of my life ; the most beloved, as well as most worthy of all my earthly comforts ; and the reason of that love was more thy inward than thy outward excellencies, which yet were many. God knows, and thou knowest it, I can say it was a match of Providence's making ; and God's image in us both was the first thing, and the most amiable and engaging ornament in our eyes. Now, I am to leave thee, and that without knowing whether I shall ever see thee more in this world, take my counsel in thy bosom, and let it dwell with thee in my stead while thou livest.

Let the fear of the Lord, and a zeal and love to his glory dwell richly in thy heart ; and thou wilt watch for good over thyself, and thy dear children and family, that no rude, light, or bad thing be committed : else God will be offended, and he will repent himself of the good he intends thee and thine.

.

And now, my dearest, let me recommend to thy care, my dear children ; abundantly beloved of me, as the Lord's blessings, and the sweet pledges of our mutual and endeared affection. Above all things endeavour to breed them up in the love of virtue, and that holy plain way of it which we have

lived in, that the world in no part of it get into my family. I had rather they were homely than finely bred, as to outward behaviour; yet I love sweetness mixed with gravity, and cheerfulness tempered with sobriety. Religion in the heart leads into this true civility, teaching men and women to be mild and courteous in their behaviour, an accomplishment worthy indeed of praise.

Next breed them up in a love one of another: tell them it is the charge I left behind me; and that it is the way to have the love and blessing of God upon them; also what his portion is, who hates, or calls his brother fool. Sometimes separate them, but not long; and allow them to send and give each other small things to endear one another with. Once more I say, tell them it was my counsel they should be tender and affectionate one to another. For their learning be liberal. Spare no cost; for by such parsimony all is lost that is saved; but let it be useful knowledge, such as is consistent with truth and godliness, not cherishing a vain conversation or idle mind; but ingenuity mixed with industry is good for the body and mind too. I recommend the useful parts of mathematics, as building houses or ships, measuring, surveying, dialling, navigation; but agriculture is especially in my eye: let my children be husbandmen and housewives; it is industrious, healthy, honest, and of good example; like Abraham and the holy ancients, who pleased God, and obtained a good report. This leads to consider the works of God and nature, of things that are good, and di-

verts the mind from being taken up with the vain arts and inventions of a luxurious world. It is commendable in the prince of Germany, and the nobles of that empire, that they have all their children instructed in some useful occupation. Rather keep an ingenious person in the house to teach them, than send them to schools, too many evil impressions being commonly received there. Be sure to observe their genius, and do not cross it as to learning: let them not dwell too long on one thing, but let their change be agreeable, and all their diversions have some little bodily labour in them. When grown big, have most care for them, for then there are more snares both within and without. When marriageable, see that they have worthy persons in their eye, of good life, and good fame for piety and understanding. I need no wealth, but sufficiency; and be sure their love be dear, fervent, and mutual, that it may be happy for them. I choose not they should be married to earthly, covetous kindred. And of cities and towns of concourse beware; the world is apt to stick close to those who have lived and got wealth there: a country life and estate I like best for my children. I prefer a decent mansion of an hundred pounds per annum, before ten thousand pounds in London, or such like place in a way of trade. In fine, my dear, endeavour to breed them dutiful to the Lord, and his blessed light, truth, and grace in their hearts, who is their Creator, and his fear will grow up with them. Teach a child (says the wise man) the way thou wilt have him to walk, and when he

is old he will not forget it. Next, obedience to thee, their dear mother; and that not for wrath, but for conscience sake; liberal to the poor, pitiful to the miserable, humble and kind to all; and may my God make thee a blessing, and give thee comfort in our dear children; and in age gather thee to the joy and blessedness of the just (where no death shall separate us) for ever!

And now, my dear children, that are the gifts and mercies of the God of your tender father, hear my counsel, and lay it up in your hearts; love it more than treasure, and follow it, and you shall be blessed here, and happy hereafter.

In the first place, remember your Creator in the days of your youth. It was the glory of Israel in the second of Jeremiah; and how did God bless Josiah, because he feared him in his youth; and so he did Jacob, Joseph, and Moses. O my dear children, remember, and fear and serve him who made you, and gave you to me and your dear mother, that you may live to him, and glorify him in your generations.

To do this, in your youthful days seek after the Lord, that you may find him; remembering his great love in creating you; that you are not beasts, plants, or stones, but that he has kept you, and given you his grace within, and substance without, and provided plentifully for you. This remember in your youth, that you may be kept from the evil of the world: for in age it will be harder to overcome the temptations of it.

Be obedient to your dear mother, a woman whose virtue and good name is an honour to you ; for she hath been exceeded by none in her time for her plainness, integrity, industry, humanity, virtue, and good understanding ; qualities not usual among women of her worldly condition and quality. Therefore honour and obey her, my dear children, as your mother, and your father's love and delight ; nay, love her too, for she loved your father with a deep and upright love, choosing him before all her many suitors ; and though she be of a delicate constitution and noble spirit, yet she descended to the utmost tenderness and care for you, performing the painful acts of service to you in your infancy, as a mother and nurse too. I charge you, before the Lord, honour and obey, love and cherish your dear mother.

Finally, my children, love one another with a true endeared love, and your dear relations on both sides, and take care to preserve tender affection in your children to each other, often marrying within themselves, (so as it be without the bounds forbidden in God's law,) that so they may not, like the forgetting unnatural world, grow out of kindred, and as cold as strangers ; but, as becomes a truly natural and Christian stock, you and yours after you may live in the pure and fervent love of God towards one another, as becometh brethren in the spiritual and natural relation.

So, my God, that hath blessed me with his abundant mercies, both of this and the other, and

better life, be with you all, guide you by his counsel, bless you, and bring you to his eternal glory ! that you may shine, my dear children, in the firmament of God's power with the blessed spirits of the just, that celestial family praising and admiring him, the God and father of it, for ever. For there is no God like unto him ; the God of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of the prophets, the apostles and martyrs of Jesus, in whom I live for ever.

So, farewell to my thrice dearly beloved wife and children.

Yours, as God pleaseth, in that which no waters can quench, no time forget, nor distance wear away, but remains for ever,

WILLIAM PENN.

LETTER CCCV.

DR. DODDRIDGE to his young friend MISS JENNINGS, pointing out certain defects of temper and character. ⁽¹⁾

DEAR JENNINGS,

January, 1726.

You will probably be surprised, that in the midst of the familiarity of daily conversation, I have recourse to the formality of a letter ; and still more, when you find it is to tell you seriously, that there are some things in your behaviour which I am so

⁽¹⁾ Dr. Doddridge was at this time quite a young man ; twenty-four years of age. It is necessary to mention this to explain some allusions in the letter.

far from admiring, that I think it worth my while to spend half an hour on a Saturday morning to engage you, if I can, to reform them. To come directly to the point, there are some particular seasons, which have occurred oftener within this last month than in all the other fourteen I have been at Harborough, in which you seem to imagine that you have a dispensation to treat me just as you please, without any regard to the considerations not only of friendship, but of common politeness! I have not time to tell stories with pen and ink, and so will not enter into particulars; besides, the instances are individually so trifling as not to deserve mention, though when ten or twenty occur in a day, they amount to something that cannot be seen without observation, nor borne without some resentment; at least, where there is not a perfect indifference, which, by the way, they have a great tendency to produce.

I appeal, my dear, to yourself, whether it be decent entirely to disregard many instances of kindness and respect, which though in themselves very little, are such as evince a mind disposed to please you; whether even so very a trifle as a cup of tea, when offered with civility and good humour, ought not either to be received or refused with a smile or a nod. Or if an air of pettishness in the whole behaviour be the most agreeable and equitable way of refusing those innocent freedoms which you know at the worst are but the errors of excessive tenderness.

After all, my dear, I own that these are but little

faults, yet when they recur frequently they throw a blemish upon a character that would be otherwise very agreeable.

I have been something more surprised at such behaviour to me, as I know that since I came into the family, I have loved you most heartily, and treated you not only with constant civility, but with tender friendship. It is with pleasure that I have discovered any opportunity of serving or pleasing you. I have spoken of you with the most affectionate respect in your absence, and almost quarrelled with some of the wisest and best of my friends, for charging you with that negligence and affectation of which I have now reminded you; and you yourself know, that when you have been disposed to quarrel and find fault, you could fix on nothing but an excess of fondness. Forgive me this wrong!

And yet on the other hand, I can never believe that you apprehend that I offer myself as a lover, and that it is therefore necessary to treat me with an air of coldness and scorn, that I may not take too much encouragement. I know not whether your late *complaisant* refusals were in jest or earnest; but of this I am sure, that if they were in jest, they had not so much wit or humour as to excuse their repetition thrice; and if they were in earnest, they were very unnecessary! However, to prevent such dreadful apprehensions, I do seriously assure you, that I have at present no such thought; and I here give it you under my hand, that if I ever offer any thing of that nature, I will proceed in form. I

will acquaint mamma in the first place, and will never plead your indulgence to my friendship as any engagement upon you to accept my love.

With this precaution I think I may safely tell you that I do still esteem you beyond any other person in the world of your age; and do really think, that when you are in a good humour—you are, without a compliment, one of the most agreeable creatures I know. I must further do you the justice to acknowledge that you have frequently, perhaps I may say generally, treated me with an air of tender friendship, which to a man of my temper is engaging and endearing in a very uncommon degree, and I need not look back further than yesterday to recollect some very agreeable instances.

But after all, my dear, I must add, that it is this mixture and uncertainty of temper and behaviour that perplexes me more than any thing else. There is an epigram in the *Spectator*, which, though not made upon your sex, so exactly expresses my sentiments, that I cannot forbear transcribing it, and would by all means advise you to let your memory imbibe it :

In all thy humours, whether grave or mellow,
Thou'rt such a wayward, testy, pleasant fellow,
Hast so much wit and mirth and spleen about thee,
There's no existing with—nor e'en without thee.

Therefore, my dear, I have one favour to beg of you, and all that I have already said was only intended as its introduction; and this is, that you would reflect a little upon my character in general,

and upon my behaviour to you in particular, and then come to a resolution to treat me in a constant manner. Be always kind and obliging, or always negligent and rude; and though I cannot say it is a matter of indifference which you choose, yet I am persuaded I shall in either case be easier.

If you can resolve upon the latter of these expedients, which yet methinks I am unwilling to suppose, my friendship is ended, but my civility will continue. I am not humble enough to make any fresh complaint either to yourself or your mother, nor spiteful enough to attempt to injure or tease you. Nay, I have so much regard to the friendship of your excellent mother, whom I know to be most tenderly concerned for your interest as well as to the obligations of common humanity, that I will do my utmost to promote your improvement in religion and in other accomplishments, as far as may be in my power. If according to my firm expectation, you take this friendly admonition as kindly as I mean it; if you make it your future care to treat me with civility and good humour, and rather to bear with any tolerable infirmity than to quarrel when I have given you no affront; in one word, if you will treat me just as you did twelve months ago, bating the article of so many kisses which I will willingly resign, I assure you, my dear, that nothing which may have past shall impair the sincerity of my tenderness and esteem. I shall then study for every opportunity of obliging you; and treat you not with the importunity of a lover, but with the easy and endearing affection of a

brother ; I shall then think it my happiness, that I live in a family with so agreeable and so charming a friend, and your affection, as well as that of mamma and aunt, will add a relish to the brightest, and a comfort to the gloomiest moments of my life ; and, whenever we part, which will certainly be in a few years, and, probably enough, in a few months, I shall go away with a very high esteem of your character and gratitude for your kindness, and at any distant time or place shall rejoice in an opportunity of expressing the sincerity and tenderness with which

I am, dear little madam,
Your very affectionate friend and servant,
P. DODDRIDGE.

On reading over this letter I find it is too long and too grave ; however, I think you cannot but reflect, that if I had loved you less, it had been both gayer and shorter.

LETTER CCCVI.

DR. DODDRIDGE to SIR JOHN R——N, expostulating with him on his profaneness. (1)

DEAR SIR JOHN, Northampton, Dec. 8, 1742.

Permit me frankly to speak my mind to you on a head, on which I fear to be silent, lest I should fail

(1) “He had resolution to reprove, in a gentle but effectual manner, persons of rank and fortune ; and had the happy art of

in gratitude to a gentleman to whom I think myself much obliged, and whom I would gladly serve to the best of my little ability.

Be not angry, when I tell you, I was heartily grieved at the liberties you took last night in using the venerable name of the ever blessed God in so light a manner; and in the needless appeals which you made to him as to matters which would have been believed on much less evidence than the word of Sir John R——n!

I have not, for some years, heard so much language of that kind, except when passing by people of low education in the streets; whether it be owing to the complaisance with which gentlemen commonly treat our profession, or, as I rather hope, to a sense of what it is in itself reasonable and decent.

I am sure, sir, that your knowledge of men and things is capable of making conversation pleasant and improving without these dreadful expletives; for dreadful I must call them, when considered in a view to that strict account which must so certainly, and so quickly, be rendered up to God for all our words, as well as our actions.

I was the more solicitous, sir, to mention the affair to you in consideration of your office as a magistrate; the dignity of which would certainly be most effectually supported by avoiding whatever it might require you to punish in others. In this

complimenting them upon some good quality they possessed, while he pointed out their irregularities, and thus prevented feelings of resentment.”—*The Rev. Job Orton’s Life of Dr. Doddridge.*

view, sir, permit me to entreat you to join your efforts with those of all other wise and good men to discountenance and, if possible, to drive out of the world this unprofitable enormity of swearing in common conversation; concerning the evil of which, I am sure, it is not necessary to enlarge, when addressing myself to a gentleman of your understanding.

I conclude, sir, with my most affectionate good wishes and prayers for you, that the whole of your conduct, in every circumstance of life, may be such as will yield the most pleasing reflections in the awful hour of death; and the most comfortable account before that Divine tribunal to which we are all hastening; and in the serious expectation of which, I have presumed to give you this trouble, hoping that you will esteem it, as it undoubtedly is, a proof that I am with great sincerity,

Your most faithful and obedient

humble servant,

PHILIP DODDRIDGE. (1)

(1) "I thought it more respectful to write to Sir John R——n on this occasion, than to speak to him before the company; but it is a law I lay down to myself to do the one or the other, lest I should seem too indifferent to the honour of God, and the good of my friends, and of the world about them."—*Diary*.

LETTER CCCVII.

REV. JOHN NEWTON to REV. MR. R——. Advice on the subject of matrimony.

DEAR SIR,

Feb. 3, 1775.

It would be wrong to make you wait long for an answer to the point you propose in your last. It is an important one. I am not a casuist by profession, but I will do my best. Suppose I imitate your laconic manner of stating the question and circumstances.

I doubt not but it is very lawful at your age to think of marriage, and, in the situation you describe, to think of money likewise. I am glad you have no person, as you say, fixedly in view; in that case advice comes a post or two too late. But your expression seems to intimate, that there is one transiently in view. If it be so, since you have no settlement, if she has no money, I cannot but wish she may pass on till she is out of sight and out of mind. I see this will not do; I must get into my own grave way about this grave business. I take it for granted, that my friend is free from the love of filthy lucre; and that money will never be the turning point with you in the choice of a wife. Methinks I hear you think, if I wanted money, I would either dig or beg for it; but to preach or marry for money, that be far from me. I commend you. However, though the love of money be a great

evil, money itself, obtained in a fair and honourable way, is desirable upon many accounts, though not for its own sake. Meat, clothes, fire, and books, cannot easily be had without it; therefore, if these be necessary, money which procures them must be a necessary likewise. If things were otherwise than you represent them, if you were able to provide for a wife yourself, then I would say, find a gracious girl, (if she be not found already,) whose person you like, whose temper, you think, will suit; and then, with your father and mother's consent, (without which I think you would be unwilling to move,) thank the Lord for her, marry her, and account her a valuable portion, though she should not have a shilling. But, while you are without income or settlement, if you have thoughts of marriage, I hope they will be regulated by a due regard to consequences. They who set the least value upon money, have in some respects the most need of it. A generous mind will feel a thousand pangs in strait circumstances, which some unfeeling hearts would not be sensible of. You could perhaps endure hardships alone, yet it might pinch you to the very bone to see the person you love exposed to them. Besides, you might have a John, a Thomas, and a William, and half a dozen more to feed; (for they must all eat;) and how this could be done without a competency on one side or the other, or so much on both sides as will make a competency when united, I see not. Besides, you would be grieved not to find an occasional shilling in your

pocket to bestow upon one or other of the Lord's poor, though you should be able to make some sort of a shift for those of your own house.

But is it not written, "The Lord will provide?" It is: but it is written again, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Hastily to plunge ourselves into difficulties, upon a persuasion that he will find some way to extricate us, seems to me a species of tempting him.

Therefore I judge, it is so far lawful for you to have a regard to money in looking out for a wife, that it would be wrong, that is, in other words, unlawful, for you to omit it, supposing you have a purpose of marrying in your present situation.

Many serious young women have a predilection in favour of a minister of the gospel; and I believe among such one or more may be found as spiritual, as amiable, as suitable to make you a good wife, with a tolerable fortune to boot, as another who has not a penny. If you are not willing to trust your own judgment in the search, entreat the Lord to find her for you. He chose well for Isaac and Jacob; and you, as a believer, have warrant to commit your way to him, and many more express promises than they had for your encouragement. He knows your state, your wants, what you are at present, and what use he designs to make of you. Trust in him, and wait for him: prayer, and faith, and patience are never disappointed. I commend you to his blessing and guidance. Remember us to all in your house.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCCVIII.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. to REV. W. UNWIN, on a case which his friend had proposed to him.—The resolute vindication of personal rights not inconsistent with the spirit of meekness which the gospel enjoins.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

July, 29, 1781.

Having given the case you laid before me in your last all due consideration, I proceed to answer it; and in order to clear my way, shall, in the first place, set down my sense of those passages in Scripture which, on a hasty perusal, seem to clash with the opinion I am going to give—"If a man smite one cheek, turn the other."—"If he take thy cloak, let him take thy coat also."—That is, I suppose, rather than on a vindictive principle avail yourself of that remedy the law allows you, in the way of retaliation, for that was the subject immediately under the discussion of the speaker. Nothing is so contrary to the genius of the gospel, as the gratification of resentment and revenge; but I cannot easily persuade myself to think, that the author of that dispensation could possibly advise his followers to consult their own peace at the expense of the peace of society, or inculcate an universal abstinence from the use of lawful remedies, to the encouragement of injury and oppression.

St. Paul again seems to condemn the practice of going to law, "Why do ye not rather suffer wrong?" &c. But if we look again, we shall find

that a litigious temper had obtained, and was prevalent among the professors of the day. This he condemned, and with good reason; it was unseemly to the last degree, that the disciples of the Prince of Peace should worry and vex each other with injurious treatment, and unnecessary disputes, to the scandal of their religion in the eyes of the heathen. But surely he did not mean, any more than his Master, in the place above alluded to, that the most harmless members of society should receive no advantage of its law, or should be the only persons in the world who should derive no benefit from those institutions, without which society cannot subsist. Neither of them could mean to throw down the pale of property, and to lay the Christian part of the world open, throughout all ages, to the incursions of unlimited violence and wrong.

By this time you are sufficiently aware, that I think you have an indisputable right to recover at law what is so dishonestly withheld from you. The fellow, I suppose, has discernment enough to see a difference between you and the generality of the clergy; and cunning enough to conceive the purpose of turning your meekness and forbearance to good account, and of coining them into hard cash, which he means to put in his pocket. But I would disappoint him, and show him, that though a Christian is not to be quarrelsome, he is not to be crushed—and that though he is but a worm before God, he is not such a worm, as every selfish unprincipled wretch may tread upon at his pleasure.

I lately heard a story from a lady, who has spent many years of her life in France, somewhat to the present purpose. An abbé universally esteemed for his piety, and especially for the meekness of his manners, had yet undesignedly given some offence to a shabby fellow in his parish. The man, concluding he might do as he pleased with so forgiving and gentle a character, struck him on one cheek, and bade him turn the other. The good man did so, and when he had received the two slaps, which he thought himself obliged to submit to, turned again, and beat him soundly. I do not wish to see you follow the French gentleman's example, but I believe nobody that has heard the story condemns him much for the spirit he showed upon the occasion.

I had the relation from Lady Austen, sister to Mrs. Jones, wife of the minister at Clifton. She is a most agreeable woman, and has fallen in love with your mother and me; insomuch, that I do not know but she may settle at Olney. Yesterday se'nnight we all dined together in the Spinnie—a most delightful retirement, belonging to Mrs. Throckmorton of Weston. Lady Austen's lackey, and a lad that waits on me in the garden, drove a wheelbarrow full of eatables and drinkables to the scene of our *fête champêtre*. A board laid over the top of the wheelbarrow served us for a table; our dining-room was a root-house lined with moss and ivy. At six o'clock, the servants, who had dined under a great elm upon the ground, at a little distance, boiled the kettle, and

the said wheelbarrow served us for a tea-table. We then took a walk into the wilderness, about half a mile off, and were at home again a little after eight, having spent the day together from noon till evening, without one cross occurrence, or the least weariness of each other. A happiness few parties of pleasure can boast of. Yours, with our joint love,

W. C.

LETTER CCCIX.

REV. T. SCOTT to his SISTER, expostulating with her, on account of her unkind treatment of him, after the great change which had taken place in his religious views.

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“ I have kept silence, *yea, even from good words : but it was pain and grief to me.*”—I would, however, once more remind you, that you have a brother—who was no hypocrite when he assured you that he loved you, at least as well as any relation that he had in the world, his wife and children excepted ; that your interest and welfare were always near to his heart ; that he would have been glad, if it had pleased God, to have had it in his power to evidence this to you by some important service : that his love is not waxed cold, nor in the least diminished, but the contrary ; that he loves you as well, and wishes you better than ever ; and that, seeing he can do nothing else, he never forgets,

in his daily prayers, to commend you and yours, soul and body, to the love, care, and blessing of his God and Saviour. Dear sister, I can truly say with Paul, that "I have continual sorrow and heaviness in my heart, for my brethren according to the flesh:" but on account of none so much as you. All the rest, though not seeing with my eyes, are friendly and civil, and not willing quite to give me up: but you have totally turned your back on me:—the favourite sister, whose heart seemed as closely knit to mine by the dearest and most confidential friendship, as the nearest relative ties! The very thought brings tears into my eyes, and I weep while I write to you. And what have I done to offend you? It has pleased the Lord, through my study of his word, with prayer for that teaching which he hath promised, to lead me to a different view of the gospel of Jesus Christ, than I had embraced: and not only so, but to lead me from seeking the favour of the world, and my own glory, to seek God's favour, aim at his glory, and divine happiness from him. A happiness I have therein tasted, to which I was before a stranger—that "peace of God which passeth all understanding," and which as much excels, even in this world, any thing I had before experienced, as the cheering, constant light of the noon-day sun exceeds the short vivid glare of a flash of lightning, which leaves the night more dark and gloomy than before. Having found that good I had long been seeking in vain, I was desirous to tell all I loved, in proportion as I loved them, what the Lord had

done for me, and how he had had mercy on me ; that they might find, what I knew they too were seeking, true happiness. “ *Come, taste and see how gracious the Lord is, and how blessed they are that put their trust in him,*” was the language of my heart. But, for want of experience and prudence, forgetting my own principle, that none can come to Jesus except he be taught of God, (‘) I was much too earnest, and in a hurry ; said too much, and went too far ; and thus, out of my abundant love, surfeited you. *Forgive me this wrong !* It was well meant, but ill judged, and worse received. O, my dear sister, I wish you as happy as I am myself, and need wish you no happier in this world. To call God my father ; to confide in his love ; to realize his powerful presence ; to see by faith his wisdom choosing, his love providing for me, his arm protecting me ; to find him (my sin notwithstanding) reconciled to me, and engaged to bless me ; to view him seated on a throne of grace, bowing his ear to my poor prayers, granting my request, supplying my wants, supporting me under every trial, sweetening and sanctifying every trouble, manifesting his love to me, and comforting me by his Holy Spirit ; to look forward to heaven as my home ; and to be able to say at night, when I go to rest, “ If I die before morning, I shall be with my gracious Lord, to enjoy his love for ever ; ” — this is my happiness ; and what is there in the world worth comparing with it ? Peace with God,

(‘) John, vi. 44—46.

peace of conscience, peace in my family, peace with all around me—these are *the blessings of peace* which God gives his people. May God give them to you! I say no more upon doctrines: only search the Scriptures, and pray to be taught of God. If I have said too much this time on the subject, I will say less next letter. Only acknowledge me as a brother, and do not quite disown me, as an incorrigible fanatic, because I believe the Scriptures, and exhort you to read them, and pray to understand them.

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Yours, &c.

T. SCOTT.

LETTER CCCX.

REV. HENRY MARTYN to MR. CORRIE, expostulating with him on his imprudent zeal.

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If there is nothing on the rock of Chunar, which occasions your frequent illness, I am sure I am not one to advise you to leave the flock. But if there is, as I have much reason to believe, then the mere loss of your services to the few people there, is, I think, not a sufficient reason for hazarding your life, in which the interest of millions of others is immediately involved. Consider, you bring a fixed habit with you, and must humour it, as much as possible, at first. When, after the experience

of a year or two, you know what you can bear, go, if you please, to the extent of your powers. It is not agreeable to the pride and self-righteous parts of our natures, to be conferring with flesh and blood: nature, under a religious form, would rather squander away life and strength, as David Brainerd did. You know how I regard him as one “the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose;” and yet considering the palpable impropriety of his attempting to do what he did, when he ought to have been in medical hands, and not being able to ascribe it to folly in such a sensible man, I feel disposed, perhaps from motives of censoriousness, to ascribe it to the desire of gaining his own good opinion.

I long to hear of a Christian school established at Benares: it will be like the ark brought into the house of Dagon. But do not be in a hurry: let your character become known, and you may do any thing. If nothing else comes of our schools, one thing I feel assured of, that the children will grow up ashamed of the idolatry and other customs of their country. But surely the general conversion of the natives is not far off:—the poverty of the Brahmins makes them less anxious for the continuance of the present system, from which they gain but little. But the translation of the Scriptures is the grand epoch. I trust we shall have the heavenly pleasure of dispersing the Scriptures together in the interior. Oh, the happiness and honour of being the children of God, the ministers of Christ!

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H. MARTYN.

SECTION II.

LETTERS ADMINISTERING SPIRITUAL COUNSEL AND
ENCOURAGEMENT, &c.

LETTER CCCXI.

LETTER of ARCHBISHOP CRANMER to MISTRESS WILKINSON, exhorting her to “flee in the time of persecution, and to seek her dwelling where she might serve God according to his word.”

The true comforter in all distress is only God, through his Son Jesus Christ, and whosoever hath him, hath company enough, although he were in a wilderness all alone; and he that hath twenty thousand in his company, if God be absent, is in a miserable wilderness and desolation. In him is all comfort, and without him is none. Wherefore I beseech you, seek your dwelling there where you may truly and rightly serve God, and dwell in him, and have him ever dwelling in you. What can be so heavy a burden as an unquiet conscience, to be in such a place as a man cannot be suffered to serve God in Christ's religion? If you are loath to depart from your kin and friends, remember that Christ calls them his mother, sisters, brothers, that do his Father's will. Where we find, there-

fore, God truly honoured according to his will, there we can lack neither friend nor kin.

If you are loath to depart for slandering of God's word, remember that Christ, when his hour was not yet come, departed out of his country into Samaria, to avoid the malice of the Scribes and Pharisees; and commanded his apostles, that if they were pursued in one place, they should flee to another; and was not Paul let down by a basket out at a window, to avoid the persecution of Aretas? And what wisdom and policy he used from time to time to escape the malice of his enemies, the Acts of the Apostles do declare. And after the same sort did the other apostles; albeit, when it came to such a point, that they could no longer escape danger of the persecutors of God's true religion, then they showed themselves, that their flying fore came not of fear, but of godly wisdom to do more good, and that they would not rashly, without urgent necessity, offer themselves to death, which had been but a temptation of God. Yea, when they were apprehended, and could no longer avoid, then they stood boldly to the profession of Christ, then they showed how little they passed of death; how much they feared God more than men, how much they loved and preferred the eternal life to come, above this short and miserable life.

Wherefore I exhort you, as well by Christ's commandment, as by the example of him and his apostles, to withdraw yourself from the malice of your and God's enemies, into some place where God is most purely served; which is no slandering

of the truth, but a preserving of yourself to God and the truth, and to the society and comfort of Christ's little flock. And what you will do, do it with speed, lest by your own folly you fall into the persecutors' hands. And the Lord send his Holy Spirit to lead and guide you wheresoever you go, and all that be godly will say, Amen. ⁽¹⁾

LETTER CCCXII.

JOHN BRADFORD to his MOTHER and BRETHREN.—A martyr's dying counsel to the persecuted.

“A comfortable letter of Master Bradford to his mother, a godly matron, dwelling in Manchester, and to his brethren and sisters, and other of his friends there.”

I am at this present in prison, sure enough, for starting to confirm that I have preached unto you: as I am ready, I thank God, with my life and blood to seal the same, if God consider me worthy of that honour; for, good mother and brethren, it is a most special benefit of God to suffer for his name sake and gospel as now I do. I heartily thank him for it, and I am sure that with him I shall be partaker of his glory. As Paul saith, “If we suffer with him, we shall reign with him.” Therefore be not faint-hearted, but rather

⁽¹⁾ Mrs. Wilkinson was, according to Strype, “a woman of good quality and a great reliever of good men.”

rejoice, at least for my sake, which now am in the right and high way to heaven, for by many afflictions we must enter the kingdom of heaven. Now God will make known his children. When the wind does not blow, then a man cannot know the wheat from the chaff; but when the blast comes, then the chaff flies away, but the wheat remains, and is so far from being hurt, that by the wind it is cleansed from the chaff, and known to be wheat. Gold, when it is cast into the fire, is the more precious;—so are God's children by the cross of affliction. God always begins his judgment at his house: Christ and the apostles were in most misery in the land of Jewry, but yet the whole land smarted for it afterwards; so now God's children are chastised in this world, that they should not be damned with the world; for surely great plagues of God hang over this realm.

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Perchance you are weakened as to that I have preached, because God does not defend it, as you think, but suffers the Popish doctrine to come again and prevail; but you must know, good mother, that God by this proves and tries his children and people, whether they will unfeignedly and simply hang on Him and his word. So did he with the Israelites, bringing them into a desert after their coming out of Egypt; where (I mean in the wilderness) was want of all things in comparison of that which they had in Egypt. Christ, when he came into this world, brought no worldly wealth nor quietness with him, but rather war. “The

world," said he, " shall rejoice, but ye shall mourn and weep ; but your weeping shall be turned into joy ; and therefore happy are they that mourn and weep, for they shall be comforted."

Wherefore fear God, stick to his word, though all the world swerve from it. Die you must once, and when or how you cannot tell. Die, therefore, with Christ, suffer for serving him truly and after his word ; for sure may we be, that of all deaths, it is most to be desired to die for God's sake. This is the most safe kind of dying ; we cannot doubt, but that we shall go to heaven if we die for his name sake. And that you shall die for his name sake, God's word will warrant you, if you stick to that which God by me hath taught you. You shall see that I speak as I think ; for by God's grace I will drink before you of this cup, if I am put to it.

I doubt not but God will give me his grace, and strengthen me thereto ; pray that he would, and that I refuse it not. I am at a point, even when my Lord God will, to come to him ; death nor life, prison nor pleasure, I trust in God, shall be able to separate me from my Lord God and his gospel. In peace, when no persecution was, then you were content and glad to hear me, then you believed me ; and will you not do so now, seeing I speak that which I trust by God's grace, if needs be, to verify with my life ? Good mother, I write before God to you, as I have preached before him.

Oh ! some will say, it will be an hinderance to you if you refuse to come to mass, and to do as others do ;—but God will further you, be you assured, as you shall one day find, who hath promised to them that suffer hinderance or loss of any thing in this world, his great blessing here, and in the world to come life everlasting.

You shall be counted a heretic ;—a heretic, but not of others, only of heretics, whose praise is a dispraise.

You are not able to reason against the priests, but God will, so that all of them shall not be able to withstand you. Nobody will do so but you only ;—indeed no matter ; for few enter in at the narrow gate which bringeth to salvation. Howbeit, you shall have with you, I doubt not, father Traves and others, my brothers and sisters, to go with you therein ; but if they will not, I, your son, in God, I trust, shall not leave you an inch, but go before you : pray that I may, and give thanks for me. Rejoice in my suffering, for it is for your sakes, to confirm the truth I have taught. Howsoever you do, beware this letter come not abroad, but into father Traves's hands ; for if it should be known that I have pen and ink in the prison, then would it be worse with me. Therefore keep this letter to yourselves, commending me to God, and his mercy in Christ Jesus. May he make me worthy for his name sake to give my life for his gospel and church. Out of the Tower of London, the 6th day of October, 1553.

My name I write not, for causes you know well

enough : like the letter never the worse. Commend me to all our good brethren and sisters in the Lord. Howsoever you do, be obedient to the higher powers ; that is, in no point either in hand or tongue rebel ; but rather, if they command that which with good conscience you cannot obey, lay your head on the block, and suffer whatsoever they shall do or say. “By patience possess ye your souls.”

LETTER CCCXIII.

JOHN BRADFORD to LORD RUSSELL, on the same subject.

Praised be God our Father, which hath vouched you worthy of faith in his Christ, and of his cross for the same. Magnified be his holy name, who, as he has delivered you from one cross, so he has made you willing, I trust, and ready to bear another, when he shall see it his time to lay it upon you ; for these are the most singular gifts of God, given to few, and to none else but to those few which are most dear in his sight.

Therefore, as I have said before, I have great cause to thank God, which hath vouched you worthy of this most bountiful blessing ; much more than you have cause, good lord, so to be : I mean thankful ; for look upon your vocation : I pray you tell me how many noblemen, earls' sons, lords, knights, and men of estimation, has God in this

realm of England dealt thus withal? I dare say you think not that you have deserved this. Only God's mercy in his Christ hath wrought this in you, as he did in Jeremiah's time, on Ebedmelech; in Ahab's time, on Obadiah; in Christ's time, on Joseph of Arimathea; in the apostles' time, on Sergius Paulus, and the queen Candace's chamberlain. Only now be thankful and continue; continue, my good lord, continue to confess Christ. Be not ashamed of him before men, for then he will not be ashamed of you. Now will he try you: stick fast unto him, and he will stick fast by you; he will be with you in trouble, and deliver you. But then you must cry unto him, for so it follows; he cried unto me, and I heard him; I was "with him in trouble." (1)

Remember Lot's wife which looked back. Remember Francis Spira. (2)

Remember that none is crowned but he that strives lawfully. Remember that all you have is at Christ's commandment. Remember he lost more for you, than you can lose for him. Remember you lose not that which is lost for his sake; for you shall find much more here and elsewhere. Remember you shall die; and when, and where, and how, you cannot tell. Remember the death of sinners is most terrible. Remember the death of God's saints is most precious in his sight. Remember the multitude goeth the wide way, which windeth to woe. Remember the strait gate which

(1) Psalm xci. (2) Who had recanted, and died miserably.

leads to glory has but few travellers. Remember Christ bids you strive to enter in thereat. Remember, he that trusts in the Lord, shall receive strength to stand against all the assaults of his enemies. Be certain all the hairs of your head are numbered. Be certain your good Father has appointed bounds, over which the devil dares not look. Commit yourself to him; he is, has been, and will be, your keeper. Cast your care upon him, and he will care for you. Let Christ be your scope and mark to aim at; let him be your pattern to work by; let him be your ensample to follow: give him your heart and your hand; your mind and your tongue; your faith and your feet: and let his word be your candle to go before you in all matters of religion. Blessed is he that walks not to these Popish prayers, nor stands at them, nor sits at them. Glorify God both in soul and body. He that gathereth not with Christ, scattereth abroad. Use prayer; look for God's help, which is at hand, to them that ask; and hope thereafter assuredly. In which prayer, I heartily desire your lordship to remember us, who, as we are going with you right gladly, (God therefore be praised,) some look to go before you, hoping that you will follow, if God so will, according to your daily prayer; "Thy will be done on earth;" the good Spirit of God always guide your lordship unto the end.

Your lordship's own for ever,

JOHN BRADFORD.

LETTER CCCXIV.

JOHN BRADFORD to MASTER WARCUP and his WIFE, on
the same occasion.

The time I perceive is come wherein the Lord's ground will be known. I mean, it will now shortly appear who have received God's gospel into their hearts indeed, to the taking of good root therein ; for such will not wither, for a little heat or sun-burning ; but will stiffly stand and grow on, in spite of the malice of all burning showers and tempests.

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And besides this, set before you also, that though the weather is foul, and storms grow apace, yet you go not alone, but others, your brothers and sisters tread the same path, as St. Peter tells us ; and therefore company should cause you to be more courageous and cheerful. But if you had no company at all to go at present with you, I pray you tell me, if even from the beginning the best of God's friends have found fairer weather and way to the place whither ye are going, I mean to heaven, than you now find, and are like to do, except you will with the worldlings, which have their portion in this life, tarry still by the way, till the storms be overpast, and then either night will so approach that you cannot travel, or the doors will be barred before ye come, and so you then must lodge with-

out in wonderful evil lodgings. Read Revelation xxii. Begin at Abel, and come from him to Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, the patriarchs, Moses, David, Daniel, and all the saints of the old Testament, and tell me whether ever any of them found any fairer way than you now find?

If the Old Testament will not serve, I pray you come to the New, and begin with Mary and Joseph, and come from them to Zechariah, Elizabeth, John Baptist, and every one of the apostles and evangelists, and search whether they all found any other way unto the city we travel towards, than by many tribulations.

Besides these, if you call to remembrance the primitive church, you would see many who have cheerfully given their bodies to most grievous torments, rather than they would be stopped in their journey. There is no day in the year, but (I dare say) a thousand at least with great joy lost their homes here; and in the city they went unto, have found other manner of homes than man's mind is able to conceive.

But if none of these things were so—if you had no company now to go with you, as you have me, your poor brother and bondman of the Lord; with many others, I trust in God, if you have none other of the fathers, patriarchs, good kings, evangelists, martyrs, and other holy saints and children of God, who in their journey to heaven-ward found, as you now find, and are like to find, if you go on forward, as I trust you will; yet you have

your master and your captain, Jesus Christ, the dear darling and only begotten and beloved Son of God, in whom was all the Father's pleasure, joy, and delectation; you have him who went before you, no fairer way, but one much fouler, into this our city of Jerusalem. I need not, I trust, rehearse what manner of way he found. Begin at his birth, and till you come to his burial, you shall find that every foot and stride of his journey was no better, but much worse than yours is now.

Wherefore, my dearly beloved in the Lord, be not so dainty, as to look for that at God's hands, your dear Father, which the fathers, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, evangelists, martyrs, saints, and his own son Jesus Christ, did not find. Hitherto we have had fair way and fair weather also: now because we have loitered by the way, and not made the speed we should have done, our loving Lord and sweet Father hath overcast the weather, and stirred up storms and tempests, that we might with more haste run out our race before night come, and the doors be barred. The devil standeth now at every inn-door in his city and country of this world, crying unto us to tarry and lodge in this or that place, till the storms be overpast; not that he would not have us wet to the skin, but that the time might overpass us, to our utter destruction. Therefore beware of his enticements. Cast not your eyes on things that are present, how this man doth, or that man doth, but cast your eyes on the gleeve, ⁽¹⁾ you run at, or else you will lose the game.

(1) *The mark.* An allusion to the words of the apostle.—*Philippians iii.*

You know that he that runs at the gleve, does not look on others that stand by, and go this way, or that way, but he looks altogether at the gleve, and on them that run with him, that those which are behind overtake him not, and that he may overtake them that are before. Even so should we do, leaving off looking on those which will not run the race to heaven's bliss, by the path of persecution with us, and casting our eyes on the end of our race, and on them that go before us, that we may overtake them; and on them which come after us, that we may provoke them to come faster after.

He that shoots will not cast his eyes in his shooting on them that stand by, or ride by the way, but rather at the mark he shoots at, for else he were likely to win the wrong way! Even so, my dearly beloved, let your eyes be set on the mark you shoot at, even Christ Jesus, who for the joy set before him did joyfully carry his cross, contemning the shame, and therefore he now sitteth on the right hand of the throne of God. Let us follow him; for this he did, that we should not be faint-hearted; for we may be most assured, that if we suffer with him, we shall, undoubtedly, reign with him; but if we deny him, surely he will deny us. For he that is ashamed of me, says Christ, and of my gospel, in this faithless generation, I will be ashamed of him before the angels of God in heaven.

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Here is not our home: therefore let us accordingly consider things, always having before our

eyes the heavenly Jerusalem ; (¹) remembering that the way thither is by persecutions ; the dear friends of God, how they have gone it after the example of our Saviour Jesus Christ, whose footsteps let us follow, even to the gallows, if God so will, not doubting, but that as he within three days rose again immortal, even so we shall do in our time ; that is, when the trump shall blow, and the angel shall shout, and the Son of Man shall appear in the clouds, with innumerable saints and angels, in majesty and great glory ; then shall the dead arise, and we shall be caught up into the clouds to meet the Lord, and to be always with him. Comfort yourselves with these words, and pray for me.

From prison, 19th November, 1553.

JOHN BRADFORD.

LETTER CCCXV.

JOHN BRADFORD to DR. HILL, physician, on the same occasion.

TO MY VERY DEAR FRIEND IN THE LORD, DOCTOR HILL,
PHYSICIAN,

The God of mercy and Father of all comfort, at this present forever, ingraft in your heart the sense of his mercy in Christ, and the continuance of his consolation, which cannot but enable you to carry with joy whatsoever cross he shall lay upon you.

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(¹) Heb. xii. Rev. xxi. xxii.

Therefore I pray you call to mind that there are but two masters, two kinds of people, two ways, and two mansion-places : the masters are Christ and Satan ; the people are servitors to either of these ; the ways are strait and wide ; the mansions, heaven and hell. Again, consider that this world is the place of trial of God's people and the devil's servants ; for as the one will follow his master, whatsoever comes of it, so will the other. For a time it is hard to discern who pertains to God, and who to the devil : as in the calm and peace, it is hard to learn who is a good shipman and warrior, and who is not ; but when the storm arises the expert mariner is known ; and as in war the good soldier is seen, so in affliction and the cross, God's children are easily known from Satan's servants ; for then, as the good servant will follow his master, so the godly will follow their Captain, come what will come : whereas the wicked and hypocrites bid adieu, and desire less of Christ's acquaintance ; for which cause the cross is called ' the probation and trial ;' because it tries who will go with God, and who will forsake him. And now, in England, we see how small a company Christ has in comparison of Satan's soldiers. Let no man deceive himself ; for he that gathereth not with Christ, scattereth abroad. No man can serve two masters ; the Lord abhorreth double hearts. The lukewarm, that is such as are both hot and cold, he spitteth out of his mouth ; none that halt in both knees, doth God take for his servants. The way of Christ is the strait way, and so strait, that as few find it, and few

walk in it, so no man can halt in it, but he must needs go upright: for as the straitness will suffer no reeling to this side or that side; so, if any halt, he is like to fall off the bridge into the pit of eternal perdition.

Strive therefore, good master doctor, now you have found it, to enter into it; and if you should be called and pulled back, look not on this side or that side, or behind you, as Lot's wife did, but straight forwards, to the end which is set before you, as if it were even now present, though it be to come. Like as you do, and desire your patients to do in your ministrations—to consider the effect that will ensue; whereby the bitterness and loathsomeness of the physic is so overcome, and the painfulness in abiding the working of that which is ministered is so eased, that it makes the patient willingly and joyfully receive that which is to be taken, although it is never so unpleasant. So, I say, set before you the end of this strait way; and then doubtless, as Paul saith, “it shall bring with it an eternal weight of glory,” whilst we look not on the thing which is seen, for that is temporal, but on the thing which is not seen, for that is eternal. So does the husbandman in ploughing and tilling, set before him the harvest-time; so does the fisher consider the draught of his net, rather than the casting in; so does the merchant the return of his merchandise; and so should we in these stormy days set before us, not the loss of our goods, liberty, and very life, but the reaping-time, the coming of our Saviour Christ to judgment; the fire that shall burn

the wicked and disobedient to God's gospel ; the blast of the trump, the exceeding glory prepared for us in heaven eternally ; such as the eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, nor the heart of man can conceive. The more we lose here, the greater joy shall we have there ; the more we suffer, the greater triumph ; for corruptible dross, we shall find incorruptible treasures ; for gold, glory ; for silver, solace without end ; for riches, robes royal ; for earthly houses, eternal palaces ; mirth without measure, pleasure without pain, felicity endless. We shall have God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. O happy place ! O that this day would come !

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And for your comfort read Heb. xi. to see what faith has done ; always considering the way to heaven is by many tribulations ; and that all they which will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution. You know that this is our alphabet. " He that will be my disciple," saith Christ, " must deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow ME ;" not this bishop, nor that doctor ; not this emperor, not that king ; but ME, saith Christ ; for he that loveth father, mother, wife, children, or very life, better than me, is not worthy of me. Remember that same Lord saith, " He that will save his life shall lose it." Comfort yourself with this, that as the devils had no power over the swine, or over Job's goods, without God's leave, so shall they have none over you. Remember also, that all the hairs of your head are numbered with

God. The devil may make one believe he will drown him, as the sea in his surges threatens the land; but as the Lord appointed bounds for the one, over the which he cannot pass, so has he done for the other. On God therefore cast your care; love him and serve him after his word; fear him, trust in God; hope at his hand for all help, and always pray, looking for the cross; and, whenever it comes, be assured the Lord is faithful, he will never tempt you further than he will make you able to bear, but in the midst of the temptation will make such a way to escape as shall be most to his glory, and your eternal comfort. God, for his mercy in Christ, with his Holy Spirit, endue you, comfort you, shadow you under the wings of his mercy, and as his dear child guide you for evermore; to whose merciful tuition I commit you with my hearty prayer; and I doubt not but that you pray for me, and so I beseech you to do still. My brother P—— tells me you wish to have the last part of St. Jerome's works, to have the use thereof for a fortnight. I cannot for these three days well spare it, but on Thursday next I will send it you, if God hinders me not; and use me, and what I have, as your own. The Lord for his mercy in Christ, direct our ways to his glory. Out of prison, by yours to command,

JOHN BRADFORD.

LETTER CCCXVI.

JOHN BRADFORD to one in spiritual distress.—“A letter full of godly comfort.”

The good Spirit of God, which guideth his children be with you, my good sister in the Lord, for ever.

Although, as I am to you, so you are unknown to me in person; yet to Him whom we desire to please, we are not only known in person, but also in heart known and thoroughly seen; and therefore, as for his sake you desire, by what you sent unto me, it should be perceived that in God you bear to me a good will; so that I might be seen in God to bear you the like, I send to you these few words in writing, wishing that in all your doings and speech, yea, even in your very thoughts, you would labour to feel, that they are all open and present before God, be they good or bad. This cogitation being often had in mind, and prayer made to God for the working of his Spirit, thereby as a mean, you shall at the length feel more comfort and advantage, than any man can know, but such as are exercised therein. Howbeit, this is to be added, that in thinking yourself, and all you have and do, are in the sight of God; this, I say, is to be added, that you think his sight is the sight not only of a Lord, but rather of a Father, which tendereth more your infirmities than you can tender the infirmities of any of your children. Yea, when in yourself you see a motherly affection to your little one that is weak, let the same be unto you a

trace to train you to see the unspeakable kind affection of God your Father towards you.

And therefore, upon the consideration of your infirmities and natural evils, which continually cleave unto us, take occasion to go to God as your Father through Christ, and lay open your infirmities and evils before his merciful heart, with desire of pardon and help, after his good will and pleasure, but in his time, and not when you will ; and by what means he will, not by what you would. In the mean season, hang on hope of his fatherly goodness, and surely you shall never be ashamed. For, if a woman, that is natural, cannot finally forget the child of her womb, be sure God, which is a Father supernatural, cannot and will not forget you. Yea, if a woman could be so forgetful, yet God himself saith, he will not be so.

This opinion, yea, rather certain persuasion, of God your Father through Christ, see that you cherish ; and by all means, as well by diligent consideration of his benefits, as of his loving corrections, whether they are inward or outward, see that you nourish it. Know for certain, that as the devil goeth about nothing so much as to bring you into doubt, whether you are God's child or no ; so whatever shall move you to admit that dubitation, be assured the same comes from the devil. If you feel in yourself not only the want of good things, but also plenty of evil, do not therefore doubt whether you are God's child in Christ, or no.

For, if you should believe or doubt, for your goodness' or illness' sake, what you feel or feel not,

then should you make Christ Jesus, for whose sake God is your Father either nothing or else but half Christ.

But, rather take occasion from your want of good, and your plenty in evil, to go to God as to your Father, so he would give you his good Spirit, that you might feel the same, and live as his child to his glory. And cease not, upon such prayers, to look for comfort in God's good time, still hoping the best, and rejecting all dubitation, and all evil works, words, and cogitations, as the Lord shall enable you by his good Spirit and grace; which I beseech him to give unto you, my good sister, for ever. And further I pray you, that as he has made you to be a helper unto your husband, so you would endeavour yourself therein to show the same, as well in soul as body, and beg grace of God that your endeavours may be effectual to both your comforts in Christ.

JOHN BRADFORD.

LETTER CCCXVII

JOHN BRADFORD to MRS. J. HARRINGTON, "exhorting her to be patient under the cross, and not to fear death"

MY DEARLY BELOVED,

I beseech our merciful Father to comfort your heavy and pensive heart, with his own consolations in Christ; as I am assured, good sister, he will in his good time, which look for with patience, after the example of Job, Elias, Abraham,

and all the dear saints of God, which are set forth unto us as patterns of patience. God grant that we may well cut our cloth after them; for God is the same God now, and the end will show that he is a merciful Lord and full of compassion. My dear sister, you shall unfeignedly feel it at the length, though at the present it seemeth otherwise unto your sense; you shall, after you are a little exercised herein, find a quiet fruit of righteousness,⁽¹⁾ the God of grace, which hath called you unto his eternal glory, confirming and strengthening you, who are somewhat afflicted, with your brethren and sisters that are in the world; for you suffer not alone, as I trust you know. It comforts me to read in your letters, that no displeasure of father, mother, husband, nor children moves you to be ruled after the counsel of the world; and therefore you desire me not to be afraid for you. Oh! my beloved, what thanks should I give to our God and dear Father, for this his exceeding kindness toward you! His name be magnified for you for ever; his mercy be more and more multiplied unto you, in you, and upon you, for ever and ever. God make me thankful herefor; but you add, that the fear of death now and then moves you a little. Howbeit, you say, that as I have counselled you, you will strive thereagainst. My good Joyce, I take you at your word: keep promise, I pray you, that is, strive against it; and I promise you, in the name of the Lord, that you shall have the victory, which I

(¹) Heb. xii.

would wish you to set before your eyes also, and so shall terror of death trouble you the less. Soldiers going to war set not before their eyes simply the stripe,⁽¹⁾ but rather the victory; and, my good sister, will not you herein follow them? In your travail with child, doth not the hope of the babe to be delivered mitigate the malady? Doth not the sick, when taking bitter and loathsome physic, set before him the advantage which will ensue? And, my dear sister, will you not learn somewhat by these? Consider what this life is, consider what death is, consider what is prepared for you after death. Concerning this life, you know that it is full of misery, vanity, and woe. It is an exile, and has nothing in it permanent. It is therefore compared to a vapour, to a smoke, to a shadow, yea, to a warfare, a wilderness, a vale of wretchedness, wherein we are compassed on every side with most fierce and fearful enemies; and should we desire to dwell here? Should we desire to live in this loathsome and laborious life? Should we wish to tarry in this wretchedness? Should we take pleasure to remain in this perilous state? Daniel's den is not so dreadful as is this dungeon we dwell in.

Concerning death, to them that are God's dear children, as I know you are one, my tenderly beloved sister, what other thing is it, than the dispatcher of all displeasure, the end of all travail, the door of desires, the gate of gladness, the port of paradise, the haven of heaven, the rail of rest and

(¹) The suffering and peril.

quietness, the entrance to felicity, the beginning of all blissfulness? It is the very bed of down, for the doleful bodies of God's people to rest in, and therefore well compared to a sleep, out of which they shall rise and awake most fresh and lusty to life everlasting. It is a passage to the Father, a chariot to heaven, the Lord's messenger, a leader unto Christ, a going to our home, a deliverance from bondage and prison, a dismissal from war, a security from all sorrows, and a manumission from all misery. So that the very heathen in some places caused the day of their death to be celebrated with mirth, melody, and minstrels; and should we be dismayed at it? Should we be afraid of it? Should we tremble to hear of it? Should such a friend as it is be unwelcome? Should the foulness of his face frighten us from his good conditions? Should the hardness of his husk hinder us from his sweet kernel? Should the roughness of the tide tie us to the bank and shore, there to be drowned, rather than the desire of our home drive us to go abroad? Should the hardness of the saddle set us to walk, and so to perish by the way, rather than to leap up and endure the same a little, and so to be where we would be?

Concerning that which is prepared for you after death, if I should go about to express it, the more I should so do, the further I should be from it. For the eye hath not seen, neither hath the ear heard, nor the heart of man able to conceive in any point the joy, mirth, melody, pleasure, power, wealth, riches, honour, beauty, fellowships, dainties,

odours, glory, wisdom, knowledge, treasures, security, peace, quietness, and eternal felicity, which you shall have and enjoy, world without end, with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, with the angels and archangels, with the patriarchs and prophets, with the apostles and evangelists, with the martyrs and confessors, and with all the saints of God, in the palace of the Lord in heaven, the kingdom of God, the glory of the Father. Oh! woe to the blindness of our eyes that see not this! Woe to the hardness of our hearts that feel not this! Woe to the deafness of our ears, that hear not this as we should do, whereby we might be so far from fearing death, that rather we should wish for it, crying with Simeon, "Now let thy servant depart in peace;" with Paul, "I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ;" with David, "When shall I come and appear before thee!" and again, "Oh! woe is me, that my habitation is thus prolonged!"⁽¹⁾ But, alas, dear sister, great is our unbelief; faint indeed is our faith, or else night and day tears should be our bread and drink, while it is said unto us, where is our God? It is a token of little love to God if we are loath to go unto him when he calleth. If my dearest friend, of a special favour and tender good will, should send a horse for me to come unto him, should I be displeased thereat? Yea, should not I be willing and glad to come unto him? And, alas! yet if death, the Lord's palfrey, the Lord's messenger, should come, I think I should not be so ready, but be fearful, as you fore-

(1) Psalm cxx.

see yourself to be ; whereby I doubt not you take occasion to lament the weakness of your faith ; and, seeing your need, to prepare for remedy against the time of need, and to beg of God his aid, strength, and comfort against that pinch ; which, undoubtedly, you shall have, and find his promise true, that in an acceptable time he has heard your prayer. Such as I have no such foresight of death, and therefore are at present less dismayed, which will turn to our greater grief in the plunge, save that for my part I hope he will never tempt me further than he will make me able to bear. Into his hands I offer myself, beseeching him, for his Christ's sake, to keep me, soul and body, to his kingdom and glory ; and to lead me, order me, and dispose me as he will, in all things, in all places, and for ever, that at the length I may come whither I desire, that is, into his own blessed presence, and the enjoyment of immortality with you and his saints. Thus much I thought good to write to you at present, to occasion you the less to fear death, which either needeth not or booteth ⁽¹⁾ not ; and therefore even reasonable men, much more spiritual men, labour to strive against the fear of that which they can by no means avoid. But of this hereafter I trust to speak with you mouth to mouth.

Now, as to my soul, I pray and wish unto you, my most dear sister in the Lord, whose grace guide you, and his mercy embrace you on every side for ever.

Yours,

JOHN BRADFORD.

(1) Availeth.

LETTER CCCXVIII.

WILLIAM TYNDAL, the translator of the Bible, to JOHN FRITH, while prisoner in the Tower.

DEARLY BELOVED,

However the matter be, commit yourself wholly and only unto your most loving Father and most kind Lord, and fear not men that threaten, nor trust men that speak fair; but trust him that is true of promise, and able to make his word good. Your cause is Christ's gospel, a light that must be fed with the blood of faith. The lamp must be dressed and snuffed daily, and oil poured in every evening and morning, that the light go not out. Though we are sinners, yet is the cause right. If, when we be buffeted for well-doing, we suffer patiently and endure, that is acceptable to God; for to that end we are called. For Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps, who did no sin. Hereby have we perceived love, that he laid down his life for us; therefore we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren. Rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven. For we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified with him; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto him.

Dearly beloved, be of good courage, and comfort your soul with the hope of this high reward, and

bear the image of Christ in your mortal body, that it may at his coming be made like to his, immortal; and follow the example of all your other dear brethren, who chose to suffer in hope of a better resurrection. Keep your conscience pure and undefiled, and say nothing against that. Stick to necessary things; and remember the blasphemies of the enemies of Christ, saying they find none but that will abjure rather than suffer the extremity. Moreover, the death of them that come again after they have once denied, though it be accepted with God, and all that believe, yet it is not glorious; for the hypocrites say, He must needs die, denying helpeth not; but might it have holpen, they would have denied five hundred times. Seeing it would not help them, therefore of pure pride and mere malice together, they speak with their mouths that which their conscience knoweth to be false. If you give yourself, cast yourself, yield yourself, commit yourself, wholly and only to your loving Father, then shall his power be in you, and make you strong; and that so strong, that you shall feel no pain which should be to another present death; and his Spirit shall speak in you, and teach you what to answer, according to his promise. He shall set out his truth by you wonderfully, and work for you above all that your heart can imagine: yea, and you are not yet dead, though the hypocrites all, with all that they can make, have sworn your death. “*Una salus victis, nullum sperare salutem;*”⁽¹⁾ to look for no man’s

(1) The only safety for the vanquished, is not to hope for safety.

help, brings the help of God to them that seem to be overcome in the eyes of the hypocrites; yea, it shall make God to carry you through thick and thin, for his truth's sake, in spite of all the enemies of his truth. There falleth not a hair, till his hour be come; and when his hour is come, necessity carries us hence, though we be not willing. But, if we be willing, then have we a reward and thanks. Fear not threatening therefore, neither be overcome of sweet words; with which twain the hypocrites shall assail you. Neither let the persuasions of worldly wisdom bear rule in your heart; no, though they be your friends, that counsel you. Let Bilney be a warning to you. Let not their visor beguile your eyes. Let not your body faint. He that endureth to the end, shall be saved. If the pain be above your strength, remember, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, I will give it you." And pray to your Father in that name, and he will ease your pain, or shorten it. The Lord of peace, of hope, and of faith, be with you. Amen.

WILLIAM TYNDAL.

Two have suffered in Antwerp, unto the great glory of the gospel; four at Rysels, in Flanders, and at Luke hath there one at the least suffered, and all nigh the same day. At Roan, in France, they persecute, and at Paris are five doctors taken for the gospel. See, you are not alone. Be cheerful, and remember that among the hard-hearted in England, there is a number reserved by grace; for

whose sakes, if need be, you must be ready to suffer. Sir, if you may write, how short soever it be, forget it not, that we may know how it goes with you, for our heart's ease. The Lord be yet again with you, with all his plenteousness, and fill you, that you flow over. Amen.

LETTER CCCXIX.

REV. S. RUTHERFORD to the LADY EARLSTONE.

MISTRESS,

Aberdeen, March 7, 1637.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you. I long to hear how your soul prospereth. I exhort you to go on in your journey: your day is short, and your afternoon's sun will soon go down; make an end of your accounts with your Lord, for death and judgment are tides that bide no man. Salvation is supposed to be at the door, and Christianity is thought an easy task: but I find it hard, and the way strait and narrow, were it not that my guide is content to wait for me, and to care for a tired traveller. Hurt not your conscience with any known sin. Let your children be as so many flowers borrowed from God: if the flowers die or wither, thank God for a summer's loan of them, and keep good neighbourhood;—to borrow and lend with him. Set your heart upon heaven, and trouble not your spirit with this clay-idol of the

world, which is but vanity, and hath but the lustre of the rainbow in the air, which cometh and goeth with a flying March shower. Clay is the idol of bastards, not the inheritance of the children. My Lord hath been pleased to make many unknown faces laugh upon me, and hath made me well content of a borrowed fire-side and a borrowed bed. I am feasted with the joys of the Holy Ghost, and my royal King beareth my charges honourably.

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The great Messenger of the Covenant and Son of God establish you on your rock, and keep you to the day of His coming.

Yours, in His sweet Lord Jesus,
S. RUTHERFORD.

LETTER CCCXX.

REV. S. RUTHERFORD to the LADY KENMUIRE.

Anworth, June, 26, 1630.

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You cannot—you must not have a more pleasant or easy condition here, than He had, who “through afflictions was made perfect.” We may indeed think,—Cannot God bring us to heaven with ease and prosperity? Who doubteth but He can? But His infinite wisdom thinketh and decreeth the contrary; and though we cannot see a reason of it, yet He hath a most just reason. We never

with our eyes saw our own soul, yet we have a soul; we see many rivers, but we know not their first spring and original fountain, yet they have a beginning. Madam, when you are come to the other side of the water, and have set down your foot on the shore of glorious eternity, and look back again to the waters and to your wearisome journey, and shall see in that clear glass of endless glory, nearer to the bottom of God's wisdom, you will then be forced to say, "If God had done otherwise with me than He hath done, I had never come to the enjoying of this crown of glory." It is your part now to believe, and suffer, and hope, and wait on; for I protest in the presence of that all-discerning eye who knoweth what I write, and what I think, that I would not want the sweet experience of the consolations of God for all the bitterness of affliction. Nay, whether God comes to his children with a rod or a crown, if He comes himself with it, it is well. Welcome, welcome Jesus, what way soever Thou come, if we can get a sight of Thee! And sure I am, it is better to be sick, provided Christ cometh to the bed-side and draweth back the curtains, and saith, "Courage, I am thy salvation," than to enjoy health, being lusty and strong, and never to be visited of God.

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The Lord Jesus be with your spirit. Your ladyship's at all obedience,

SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

LETTER CCCXXI.

JOHN EVELYN, ESQ. to the COUNTESS OF SUNDERLAND.

MADAM,

Says-court, 12 Sept. 1686.

I am not unmindful of the late command you laid upon me, to give you a catalogue of such books as I believed might be fit to entertain your more devout and serious hours; and I look upon it as a peculiar grace and favour of God to your ladyship, that amidst so many temptations, and grandeur of courts, the attendants, visits, diversions, and other circumstances of the palace, and the way you are engaged in, you are resolved that nothing of all this shall interrupt your duty to God and the religion you profess, whenever it comes in competition with the things of this world, how splendid soever they may appear for a little and (God knows) uncertain time: madam, it is the best, and most grateful return you can make to Heaven for all the blessings you enjoy, amongst which there is none you are more happy in, than in the virtue, early and solid piety of my Lady Anne, and progress of your little son. Madam, the foundation you have laid in those two blessings, will not only build, but establish your illustrious family, beyond all the provisions you can make of gallant and great in the estimation of the world; and will find the comfort of it, when all this noise and hurry shall vanish as a dream, and leave nothing to support us in time of need

I am persuaded you often make these reflections from your own great judgment and experience of the vicissitudes of things present, and prospect of future, which is only worth our solicitude.

I am, &c.

JOHN EVELYN.

LETTER CCCXXII.

DR. HENRY MORE to a FRIEND.

SIR,

I am glad that my professed averseness from you and your brother's giving yourselves the trouble of seeing me before I took coach, prevailed with you so far as to prevent it. It had been too much pains for so small a time of enjoying one another's company ; and so less fitted for what it was chiefly intended, in reference to your brother : your tender fraternal care of whom I cannot but highly approve in you, that he may be right in all points, both of life and belief. But I must, on the other side, blame you, that you have such an overvalue for my person in these things ; when exciting in every man a sense how trusty a domestic guide they have within, if they will faithfully and sincerely follow it, may prove a more compendious way to that happiness they ought to seek after—their union with God, and the living under the conduct of his Holy Spirit.

The first step to which is sincerity, or a firm re-

solution of doing our duty to the best of our power in every thing ; in embracing what is holy and virtuous, and avoiding what is really sinful, or seems to us to be so.

And then in the second place, as for those things that are not really sinful in themselves, if we find ourselves captivable by them, and that they would any way enslave us ; that we make it our business to break to pieces those fetters, and so to mortify every concupiscence that would step in betwixt us and the divine nature communicable unto us ; and which will certainly be revived in us, if in order thereunto we do faithfully endeavour our disunion from the captivating desires of the animal life, even in things themselves indifferent, if they offer to captivate us, and we find a reluctancy in ourselves not to pursue them, or forego them : provided always, that it be done consistently with the health of our body, or without any injury, or just scandal to any one.

And lastly, that we take all fit occasions for devout meditation, and earnest prayer to God through Jesus Christ ; who has promised the assistance of the Holy Spirit from on high, to all those that believe on his name ; and that we remember, that his mediation with the Father is chiefly for this ;—by his Spirit to subdue the power of sin in mankind, and to raise himself a glorious and spotless church here upon earth, according to the richness of his promises. And this is the true faith, whereby we shall be enabled to overcome the world ; even our firm belief in the power and Spirit of God, procured for us by

the potent mediation and intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ.

He who is so predisposed, that he can heartily receive these three points, and act accordingly, he will find the issue thereof blissful and glorious. But, if a man make nothing to halt and falter in the first, and knowingly and willingly allows himself in any sin ; or will fondly suffer himself to be captivated by any vain lust or pleasure, the event will be to him accordingly ; the promised blessing being only to those that hunger and thirst after righteousness. But the unstable and hypocritical (till they cease to be so) are excluded the holy city, both here and for ever. But for those that are sincere, in what they are weak, they shall be strengthened ; and what they fail in, shall be remitted to them, through the love of our Lord Jesus.

If your brother had been with me that morning, I could not have suggested any thing more material to him ; nor can I indeed to any one ; no, nor to my own soul ; but the thing lieth at our own doors, whether we will enter into, and faithfully go on in this method, so sure and approved for the recovering souls from eternal death, and from the snares of those subtle hunters of men for their own gain, to be masters of their persons and purses ; proposing to them such terms of salvation, as may best comply with their present, or any new emerging corruptions.

If this may be useful to him in any way, I have with all faithfulness writ it for that purpose ; but am hugely well satisfied that he has so able a mo-

nitor as yourself; of so stable and sensible a spirit, as I have lately discovered in you, in my conferences with you: for which I did not a little rejoice. And I make no question; but, if you hold to your sincerity, the power of the Spirit of our Lord Jesus will carry you through all difficulties, and make you in the conclusion more than conqueror.

This is all for the present, but that I am,
 Dear Sir, your affectionate friend, to serve you,
 HEN. MORE.

LETTER CCCXXIII.

JEREMY TAYLOR to JOHN EVELYN, Esq., after a pleasant visit to his correspondent at Says-court.

HONOURED AND DEAR SIR, April 16, 1656.

I hope your servant brought my apology with him, and that I already am pardoned, or excused in your thoughts, that I did not return an answer yesterday to your friendly letter. Sir, I did believe myself so very much bound to you for your so kind, so friendly reception of me in your *Tusculanum*, that I had some little wonder upon me when I saw you making excuses that it was no better. Sir, I came to see you and your lady, and am highly pleased that I did so, and found all your circumstances to be an heap and union of blessings. But I have not either so great a fancy and opinion of the prettiness of your abode, or so low an opinion of your prudence and piety, as

to think you can be any ways transported with them. I know the pleasure of them is gone off from their height before one month's possession; and that strangers, and seldom seers, feel the beauty of them more than you who dwell with them. I am pleased, indeed, at the order and cleanness of all your outward things; and look upon you not only as a person, by way of thankfulness to God for his mercies and goodness to you, specially obliged to a great measure of piety, but also as one who, being freed in great degrees from secular cares and impediments, can, without excuse and allay, wholly intend what you so passionately desire—the service of God. But, now I am considering yours, and enumerating my own pleasures, I cannot but add that, though I could not choose but be delighted by seeing all about you, yet my delices were really in seeing you severe and unconcerned in these things, and now in finding your affections wholly a stranger to them, and to communicate with them no portion of your passion, but such as is necessary to him that uses them or receive their ministries. Sir, I long truly to converse with you; for I do not doubt but in those liberties we shall both go bettered from each other.

I am, in great heartiness and dearness of affection, dear Sir,

Your obliged and most affectionate friend
and servant,

JER. TAYLOR.

LETTER CCCXXIV.

DR. DODDRIDGE to MRS. BANKS, on the advantages of regularity in the exercises of devotion; and on the best mode of discharging them.

MADAM,

March 26, 1722.

You oblige me, when I write, to assume a grave air, and, as you are pleased to call it, to give you a little good advice. I have really nothing to do upon this occasion, but to refer you to your own reflections. You know we are, generally speaking, most happy in all our affairs, when we are most regular and exact in those duties which we immediately owe to our God; and, as I have frequently heard you observe, closet devotion is one of the noblest means of preserving and maintaining the divine life.

I believe this is a subject you are peculiarly attached to; and therefore, if you please, we will discourse a little further upon it. It would indeed be a very dangerous thing to rest in this duty, as if it comprehended the whole of Christianity; but yet I cannot but look upon it as a very important agent; because it exerts a happy though silent influence upon all our conversation. As for instance: when we are frequently upon our knees before God in prayer, and there lamenting our guilt and our ingratitude, and acknowledging what dreadful things we have deserved at his hands, we shall grow into an humble opinion of ourselves, and consequently, as our pride is humbled, we

shall not be so ready to take fire at the transient affronts and provocations that may be offered. We shall scarcely know how to be severe upon the little injuries we receive from our fellow-creatures, when we have been confessing before our God, that we have offered him the highest indignities, and begging that he would not be severe upon us. Besides, when our hearts are melting under the impressions of the Redeemer's love, which they frequently are in these touching duties, we shall be anxiously inquiring what we may do to express our gratitude; and then reason will suggest, that we cannot do it more effectually than by endeavouring to recommend religion to others, and especially those we immediately converse with, by a meek, obliging, condescending behaviour. And then again, by frequent acts of particular humiliation and repentance, of which the closet is the proper scene, our consciences will contract such a holy tenderness, that even the least failing of our lives will make a deep impression upon the mind; and the frequent return of solemn seasons of worship will put us upon inquiring, what we have to say to our God upon such an occasion. And so by reflecting every evening upon the errors of the past day, we shall learn to avoid those of the next.

You will pardon me, madam, that I am thus particular in mentioning the advantages of a well regulated closet devotion. I am far from suspecting that you neglect it in general; but since you will oblige me to give you advice, which I am sensible does

not become my age and circumstances, it shall be this, to have some fixed time for this duty every day, and never to break in upon it, unless there be a very urgent necessity. I cannot but insist upon this circumstance, because I know, that, if we are not upon our guard, business and diversions are apt to take up too large a share of our time, and oblige us either wholly to omit our devotions, or, what to the most valuable purpose is much the same thing, to hurry them over in a very hasty and contracted manner. If such negligence be too frequent, as indeed it must be without some such method as I propose, religious impressions wear off, and we do not know how to return to our duty with the life and spirit we desire. Such an indisposition for private devotion is almost unavoidably attended with the visible decay of practical piety, which may prove a great hinderance to us in our way to heaven, and give us bitter reflections for weeks and months. Perhaps, madam, your own experience can reflect this picture; I am sure I know one whose can.

As for the particular season for this duty, it must be left to our own prudence. I suppose, in a general way, we should choose that time in which we find our spirits commonly most lively, and when we are most secure from interruption.

Methinks, for the particular manner in which secret devotion should be conducted, we had best consult our own taste and the present temper of our minds. Sometimes we shall choose one pretty long prayer; and sometimes a greater number of shorter ones. Generally speaking, extemporary

prayer seems preferable to forms; but now and then we may find the compositions of others of considerable use.

Reading the Scriptures is, no doubt, a very important part of secret devotion. And, if you will permit me to give you my sentiments upon this branch also, I should rather, with submission, advise you to pitch upon some select passages of the Old Testament, particularly the writings of David and Solomon, and some of the prophecies, than to confine yourself to read straight on throughout the whole volume. Certainly, the whole of the New Testament cannot be studied too much, especially the life and discourses of our Saviour, and the practical part of the Epistles. I believe, however, you will find it best not to run over many chapters at a time, but to select a few verses, and dwell upon them in your thoughts, intermixing pious reflections and ejaculations as you proceed. And really, madam, the Scriptures thus read, will afford infinitely more satisfaction than the most rational, elegant, and pathetic human composition.

And now, madam, I am afraid I have more reason to beg your pardon for the length of my letter than the length of my silence; but I hope you will believe it was meant with an honest zeal for your service: for I am,

With the sincerest gratitude and respect,

Dear madam,

Your most obliged and most humble servant,

P. DODDRIDGE.

LETTER CCCXXV.

DR. DODDRIDGE to Miss SCOTT, a friend in deep spiritual distress.

DEAR MADAM,

June 25, 1745.

I return you my most affectionate thanks for the freedom with which you have opened your mind to me, both by repeated and unreserved conversations, and by a communication of papers intended entirely for your own use. The consequence, I most faithfully assure you, is, that the more I know you, the more firmly am I convinced, not only that you are a real, but that you are a very advanced Christian. I have already pointed out the principles on which I build this conclusion. But as I have not yet been so happy as to remove your remaining difficulties, give me leave, in this letter, to lay before you some hints as to what I apprehend may be the cause, and, by a Divine blessing, in some measure at least, the cure, of the anxiety which so much harasses your mind. And pardon me, if in this strait of time, and in this hour which with pleasure, for your service, I take from my sleep, before the journey and labours of to-morrow, I do but touch upon particulars, and give short hints, instead of illustrating, or reasoning upon them at large.

Now, as to the causes of your present distress, I apprehend the following, among others, are the chief and most peculiar; for I shall not mention those two grand cardinal sources of all our dis-

tress,—some remainder of sin in the best hearts while they continue here, and the artifice and malice of our common enemy. What is most peculiar seems to be, 1. The weakness of animal nature, which, after the attacks you have borne, must necessarily be very feeble, unless it had been strengthened by a miracle, which even in such a case we have no warrant to expect. 2. The extraordinary elevation of devotion, which at some times you have known, and particularly when you were first setting out in religion. 3. In consequence of this, an ardent desire of equalling all your former fervour of devotion, in the present infirm state of your health; by the very desire and endeavour of which, I heartily wish that you may not utterly ruin it. 4. A hard and unjust conclusion which you have hence drawn against yourself, as if you were one of the most ungrateful and criminal of our race, that excites an indignation against yourself, which you think you can never feel with sufficient sensibility. 5. The sublime ideas which you have formed to yourself of the spiritual life, in which you seem not to make sufficient allowance, either for the natural infirmities of this our animal frame when in its best state, nor for the avocations inseparable from the life of one who is not absolutely a recluse from the world. I really apprehend these to be the causes of your disquietude.

With relation to the proper method of cure, the following particulars present themselves, which I wish I had time better to express and digest. 1. To

lay it down as a certain principle, that religion consists more in an intelligent, rational, and determinate choice of the will than in any ardent transport of the affections. 2. To consider that there is a certain degree of afflicting ourselves for past sins, and for present imperfections, which is so far from being our duty, that it is very likely to prove a snare, and to produce consequences displeasing to our gracious Father in heaven, and injurious both to ourselves and others. 3. Settle it deliberately in your understanding as a certain truth, that the grand security of the soul, lies in deliberately entrusting itself to Christ, as chosen in all his offices; and in devoting itself to God through him, according to the tenor of the Christian covenant; and in steadily endeavouring to practise what the word of God requires, and to forbear every thing which it forbids, and in referring all its concerns, not excepting even the degrees of its spiritual comfort and enjoyment, to his wise and gracious determination. 4. In consequence of this, be often, and indeed daily, renewing your covenant with God, in the manner which that most excellent servant of Christ, your ever honoured and beloved father, has so intelligently, affectionately, and frequently recommended. 5. Let your devotions be reduced within narrow limits, and be rather frequent and short, than protracted to any great length; and in your addresses at the throne of Grace, be more intent upon the sincerity of the heart, and the calm fixedness of the thoughts, than about the flow of the affections, which are not and

cannot be immediately in our own power; but may, humanly speaking, depend upon a thousand physical causes, the nature of which we do not so much as imagine. 6. Consider how much of religion consists in trusting in God, in hoping in his mercy, and in rejoicing in Him; and how suitable this is to the peculiar constitution of the gospel, and the character which Christ our Mediator bears; by consequence, therefore, how essential a branch of gratitude it is, and how much a tender conscience should be upon its guard that it does not fail here. 7. Remember continually, that after all, it is by faith in the merits and intercession of Christ, and not by the perfection of our works, that we are to obtain justification and life; and that the best of Christians, while they are in this world, have their imperfections; and may, and must, under a sense of them, apply daily to the great Advocate, and renew the actings of their faith upon his efficacious blood and intercession. 8. Make yourself familiarly acquainted with the promises of God relating to the pardon of sin, the imparting grace to the soul that seeks it; and choose for some time every morning some comfortable promise to be the subject of your meditation; and now and then employ that fine talent which God has given you for poetical composition, in paraphrasing such Scriptures in short hymns. 9. Endeavour to exert yourself as much as possible in attempts of usefulness, by conversing with the children who are so happy as to be the objects of your pious care, and with those persons who are in circumstances that bear any re-

semblance to your own. 10. Disburden yourself, as much as possible, of every anxious thought relating to futurity, whether regarding temporals or spirituals; confine your views to present duties, and leave future contingencies in the hands of God. 11. Be thankful for the least glimmering of hope, and for any kind and degree of consolation which God is pleased to give you; and take great heed that you do not suspect those comforts which lead you to God and happiness to be delusions, merely because they are not so permanent and effectual as you could wish, lest you should injure that great Agent to whom you are so highly obliged, and whom you fear so tenderly to grieve. 12. In one word, study by all means to nourish the love of God in your heart; breathe forth, with humble tenderness, the genuine impressions of it; and as human nature must have its weary intervals, delight to look to God in them, as a being who penetrates the inmost recesses of the heart, and sees that secret tendency of soul to him, which I have neither tears nor words to express. "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee:" or that I would; "thou knowest I would prefer the sensible exercises of it to any other delight." By this method the habits of Divine love will strengthen; and, I verily believe, that time will at length produce such a consciousness of it, that you will be no more able to doubt of a share in it than of your own existence.

This, madam, is the advice which, though not expressed with the accuracy I could wish, I would

recommend to you as the most important I can give. My earnest prayers for you, and those which I desire daily to repeat, are that God himself may be your comforter, and pour out upon your mournful and wounded heart the oil of gladness, in a rich abundance. To know that I have been, in any instance, the instrument of reviving so excellent a spirit, would give me unutterable joy, and I should esteem it among the greatest honours God has ever bestowed upon, dear madam,

Your most affectionate Friend,

and faithful humble servant,

P. DODDRIDGE.

LETTER CCXXVI.

REV. GEORGE WHITFIELD to MRS. D—.

DEAR MADAM,

Savannah, Jan. 31, 1740.

I rejoice to hear that you are likely to be cast out of your mother's *will*, only for following Christ. This may be only the beginning of temptations. God, I believe, out of love, will try you to the uttermost. You have drank deep of heavenly comforts; you must pledge our Lord in his cup of sufferings. Those who saw him on Mount Tabor afterwards were with him in the garden. But fear not—the Lord is with you:—neither men nor devils shall hurt you. The sweet communion we have had with God, and through him with one another, often comforts my soul. Who knows,

but that time may be again repeated? Indeed, I want words as well as time to express with what thankfulness I desire to subscribe myself, dear madam,

Your unworthy brother
And obliged servant in our common Lord,
G. W.

LETTER CCXXVII.

JOHN WESLEY to MR. KNOX, expostulating with him on an apparent declension of religious zeal.

DEAR SIR,

Sligo, May 30, 1765.

Probably this will be the last trouble of the kind which you will receive from me. If you receive it in the same spirit wherein it is wrote, I shall be glad. If not, my reward is with the Most High. I did not choose it should be delivered till I was gone, lest you should think I wanted something from you. By the blessing of God, I want nothing, only that you should be happy in time and in eternity.

Still I cannot but remember the clear light you had with regard to the nature of real scriptural Christianity. You saw what heart religion meant, and the gate of it, justification. You had earnest desires to be a partaker of the whole gospel blessing: and you discovered the sincerity of those desires, by the steps you took in your family. So that in every thing you was hastening to be, not almost, but altogether, a Christian.

Where is that light now ? Do you now see that true religion is not a negative or an external thing ; but the life of God in the soul of man ; the image of God stamped upon the heart ? Do you now see, that in order to this, we are justified freely, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus ? Where are the desires after this, which you once felt ? the hungering and thirsting after righteousness ? And where are the outward marks of a soul groaning after God, and refusing to be comforted with any thing less than his love ?

Will you say, "But if I had gone on in that way, I should have lost my friends and my reputation ?" This is partly true. You would have lost most of those friends who neither love nor fear God. Happy loss ! These are the men who do you more hurt than all the world besides. These are the men whom, if ever you would be a real Christian, you must avoid as you would avoid hell-fire. "But then they will censure me." So they will. They will say you are a fool, a madman, and what not. But what are you the worse for this ? Why, the Spirit of glory and of Christ shall rest upon you. "But it will hurt me in my business." Suppose it should, the favour of God would make large amends. But very probably it would not. For the winds and the seas are in God's hands, as well as the hearts of men. "But it is inconsistent with my duty to the church." Can a man of understanding talk so, and talk so in earnest ? Is it not rather a copy of his countenance ? Indeed, if you mean, "inconsistent with my pleasing this or that clergy-

man," I allow it. But let them be pleased or displeased, please thou God. But are these clergymen the church? Unless they are holy men, earnestly loving and serving God, they are not even members of the church; they are no part of it. And unless they preach the doctrines of the church, contained in her articles and liturgy, they are no true ministers of the church, but are eating her bread and tearing out her bowels!

"But you will not leave the church." You never will by my advice: I advise just the contrary: I advise you to lose no opportunity of attending the service of the church, and receiving the Lord's supper, and of showing your regard for all her appointments. I advise, steadily to adhere to her doctrine in every branch of it; particularly with regard to the two fundamental points,—justification by faith and holiness. But above all, I cannot but earnestly entreat you, not to rest till you experience what she teaches; till (to sum up all in one word) God cleanses the thoughts of your heart by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit, that you may perfectly love him, and worthily magnify his holy name. Unless this be done, what will it profit you to increase your fortune, to preserve the fairest reputation, and to gain the favour of the most learned, the most ingenious, and the most honourable clergymen in the kingdom? What will it profit a man to gain all these, and to lose his own soul?

I know that to God all things are possible: therefore it is possible you may take this kindly.

If so, I shall hope to receive a line from you. If not, let it be forgotten till we meet at the judgment-seat of Christ.

I am, dear Sir,
Your affectionate servant.

LETTER CCCXXVIII.

JOHN WESLEY to MR. BLACKWELL.

DEAR SIR,

Bristol, September 24, 1754.

Although I hope to see you in about a fortnight, yet I could not be satisfied without sending you a few lines first. Since I left London, I have had many thoughts concerning you; and sometimes uneasy ones. I have been jealous over you, lest you should not duly improve the numerous talents with which God has entrusted you; nay, I have been afraid lest your very desire of improving them should grow weaker, rather than stronger. If so, by what means is it to be accounted for? What has occasioned this feebleness of mind? May it not partly be occasioned by your conversing more than is necessary (for so far as it is necessary it does not hurt us) with men that are without God in the world; that love, think, talk of earthly things only? partly by your giving way to a false shame, (and that in several instances,) which the more you indulge, it increases the more? and partly by allowing too large a place in your thoughts and affec-

tions even to so innocent an enjoyment as that of a garden? If this leaves you fewer opportunities of hearing the word which is able to save your soul, may not you even hereby grieve the Holy Spirit, and be more a loser than you are sensible of? I know both Mrs. Blackwell and you desire to please God in all things. You will therefore, I know, receive these hints as they are intended; not as a mark of disesteem, but rather of the sincerity with which

I am, dear sir,

Your ever affectionate servant.

LETTER CCCXXIX.

JOHN WESLEY to Miss —.

February 21, 1752.

Probably, this may be the last trouble of the kind which you will receive from me. Therefore you may forgive me this; and the rather, when you consider my motives to it. You know I can have no temporal view; I can have none but a faint, distant hope (because with God all things are possible) of doing some service to one whom I love. And this may answer the question which you might naturally ask, "What would you have? What do you want with me?" I want you, not to be a convert to my opinions, but to be a member of Christ, a child of God, and an heir of his kingdom.

Be any thing, as to outward profession, so you are lowly in heart; so you resist and conquer every motion of pride, and have that mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus. Be what you please besides; only be meek and gentle, and in patience possess your soul; so that one may truly say to you,

“Calm thou ever art within,
All unruffled, all serene.”

Hear what preacher you will; but hear the voice of God, and beware of prejudice and every unkind temper: beware of foolish and hurtful desires, or they will pierce you through with many sorrows. In one word, be any thing but a trifler, a trifler with God and your own soul. It was not for this that God gave you

A mind superior to the vulgar herd.

No: but that you might employ all your talents to the glory of Him that gave them. O do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God! Is he not still striving with you? striving to make you, not almost, but altogether, a Christian? Indeed you must be all or nothing; a saint or a devil; eminent in sin, or holiness! The good Lord deliver you from every snare, and guide your feet in the way of peace! How great a pleasure would this give to all your real friends, and in particular to

Your affectionate servant for Christ's sake.

LETTER CCCXXX.

JOHN WESLEY to Miss —, on her coming into possession of a large fortune.

Colchester, March 20, 1759.

My wife, Miss —, surprised me last night by informing me you are left mistress of a large fortune. Shall I say, agreeably surprised me? I cannot tell; because I believe there is another world; and I do not know what influence this change may have on your condition. Therefore I am in fear and in hope. You may be hereby far more happy, or far more miserable, in eternity! O make a stand! Consider the situation you are in; perhaps never before were you in so great danger. You know a little of your natural tempers: now you have means of indulging, and thereby inflaming, them to the uttermost. And how many will incite you so to do! How few will dare to warn you against it! Now what food will you have for pride! what infinite temptations to think more highly than you ought to think! You do so already. But O, where will you stop? The good Lord arrest the storm in mid career! How impetuously now, unless God interpose, must self-will whirl you along! How deeply, unless he help, will you shortly be immersed in practical atheism, as ten thousand things will concur to drive God out of your thoughts, as much as if he were not in the world. But, above all, how will you escape from being swallowed up in idolatry? love of the world, such as you never knew before?

Hitherto you have been greatly superior to every delicacy in food : but even this may assault you now ; and perhaps raise in you other desires which you are now a stranger to. At present, you are above the follies of dress ; but will you be so a twelvemonth hence ? May you not easily slide into the pride of life, in this as well as other instances ? especially considering how your vanity will be gratified thereby ? For who will not admire and applaud your admirable taste ? It will only remain for you to marry some agreeable person, that has much wit and sense, with little or no religion ; then it is finished ! Either you will be thoroughly miserable in this world, or miserable to eternity.

“ But what business is this of yours ? Cannot you let me alone ? What have I to do with you ? ” Believe me, I could very easily let you alone, if I had not a real and tender good-will toward you ; and if I did not know (what perhaps you do not) that you have need even of me. You want friends who understand you well, and who dare tell you the whole, plain truth ; and yet not in a surly, imperious manner ; for then you could not receive it. I have endeavoured to do this once more. Will not you forgive me ? I cannot but think, if you do not thank, you will at least excuse,

Your affectionate servant.

LETTER CCCXXXI.

JOHN WESLEY to a LADY ; a member of the society.

February 7, 1776.

I have found some of the uneducated poor who have exquisite taste and sentiment ; and many, very many, of the rich who have scarcely any at all. But I do not speak of this : I want you to converse more, abundantly more, with the poorest of the people, who, if they have not taste, have souls, which you may forward in their way to heaven. And they have (many of them) faith, and the love of God, in a larger measure than any persons I know. Creep in among these, in spite of dirt, and a hundred disgusting circumstances ; and thus put off the gentlewoman. Do not confine your conversation to genteel and elegant people. I should like this as well as you do : but I cannot discover a precedent for it in the life of our Lord, or any of his apostles. My dear friend, let you and I walk as he walked.

I now understand you with regard to the P——s ; but I fear in this you are too delicate. It is certain their preaching is attended with the power of God to the hearts of many ; and why not to yours ? Is it not owing to a want of simplicity ? “ Are you going to hear Mr Wesley ? ” said a friend to Mr. Blackwell. “ No,” he answered, “ I am going to hear God : I listen to him, whoever preaches ; otherwise I lose all my labour.”

“ You will only be content to convert worlds ? You shall hew wood, or carry brick and mortar : and when you do this in obedience to the order of Providence, it shall be more profitable to your own soul than the other.” You may remember Mr. De Renty’s other remark : “ I then saw that a well-instructed Christian is never hindered by any person or thing. For whatever prevents his doing good works, gives him a fresh opportunity of submitting his will to the will of God ; which at that time is more pleasing to God, and more profitable to his soul, than any thing else which he could possibly do.”

LETTER CCCXXXII.

JOHN WESLEY to the SAME.

February 26, 1776.

What I advise you to is, not to contract a friendship, or even acquaintance, with poor, inelegant, uneducated persons ; but frequently, nay, constantly, to visit the poor, the widow, the sick, the fatherless, in their affliction ; and this, although they should have nothing to recommend them, but that they are bought with the blood of Christ. It is true, this is not pleasing to flesh and blood. There are a thousand circumstances usually attending it which shock the delicacy of our nature, or rather of our education. But yet the blessing which follows this labour of love will more than balance the cross.

“To be uneasy under obligations which we cannot repay,” is certainly a fruit of diabolical generosity ; and therefore Milton, with great propriety, ascribes it to the devil, and makes him speak quite in character, when he says, concerning his obligations to God himself,—

So burdensome still paying, still to owe.

I am quite of another mind ; I entirely agree with you, that the more sensible we are of such obligations, the more happy we are. Surely this yoke is easy, and this burden is light !

LETTER CCCXXXIII.

JOHN WESLEY to the SAME. Business no hinderance to devotion.

December 10, 1777.

You do not at all understand my manner of life. Though I am always in haste, I am never in a hurry ; because I never undertake any more work than I can go through with perfect calmness of spirit. It is true, I travel four or five thousand miles in a year. But I generally travel alone in my carriage ; and, consequently, am as retired ten hours in a day, as if I was in a wilderness. On other days, I never spend less than three hours (frequently ten or twelve) in the day alone. So there are few persons in the kingdom who spend so many hours secluded from all company. Yet I

find time to visit the sick and the poor; and I must do it, if I believe the Bible, if I believe these are the marks whereby the Shepherd of Israel will know and judge his sheep at the great day; therefore, when there is time and opportunity for it, who can doubt but this is matter of absolute duty? When I was at Oxford, and lived almost like a hermit, I saw not how any busy man could be saved. I scarce thought it possible for a man to retain the Christian spirit, amidst the noise and bustle of the world. God taught me better by my own experience. I had ten times more business in America (that is, at intervals) than ever I had in my life. But it was no hinderance to silence of spirit.

Mr. Boehm was chaplain to Prince George of Denmark; secretary to him and Queen Anne; principal manager of almost all the public charities in the kingdom, and employed in numberless private charities. An intimate friend, knowing this, said to him when they were alone, "Sir, are you not hurt by that amazing hurry of business? I have seen you in your office, surrounded with people, listening to one, dictating to another, and at the same time writing to a third: could you then retain a sense of the presence of God?" He answered, "All that company, and all that business, no more hindered or lessened my communion with God, than if I had been all alone in a church, kneeling before the communion-table." Was it not the same case with him to whom Gregory Lopez said, "Go and be a hermit in Mexico?" I am concerned for you; I am sorry you should be content

with lower degrees of usefulness and holiness than you are called to. But I cannot help it ; so I submit ; and am still,

My dear Miss M——,

Yours in sincere affection.

LETTER CCCXXXIV.

REV. JOHN NEWTON to a NOBLEMAN.—A very fanciful thought turned to excellent account.

MY LORD,

August, 1775.

I have no apt preface or introduction at hand, and as I have made it almost a rule not to study for what I should offer your lordship, I therefore beg leave to begin abruptly. It is the future promised privilege of believers in Jesus, that they shall be as the angels; and there is a sense in which we should endeavour to be as the angels now. This is intimated to us where we are taught to pray, “Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.” I have sometimes amused myself with supposing an angel should be appointed to reside awhile upon earth in a human body; not in sinful flesh, like ours, but in a body free from infirmity, and still preserving an unabated sense of his own happiness in the favour of God, and of his unspeakable obligation to his goodness;—and then I have tried to judge, as well as I could, how such an angel would comport himself in such a situation. I know not that

I ever enlarged upon the thought, either in preaching or writing. Permit me to follow it a little in this paper.

Were I acquainted with this heavenly visitant, I am willing to hope I should greatly reverence him ; and, if permitted, be glad in some cases to consult him. In some, but not in all ; for I think my fear would be equal to my love. Methinks I could never venture to open my heart freely to him, and unfold to him my numberless complaints and infirmities ; for, as he could have no experience of the like things himself, I should suppose he would not know how fully to pity me, indeed hardly how to bear with me, if I told him all. Alas ! what a preposterous, strange, vile creature should I appear to an angel if he knew me as I am ! It is well for me that Jesus was made lower than the angels, and that the human nature he assumed was not distinct from the common nature of mankind, though secured from the common depravity ; and because he submitted to be under the law in our name and stead, though he was free from sin himself, yet sin and its consequences, being (for our sakes) charged upon him, he acquired, in the days of his humiliation, an experimental sympathy with his poor people. He knows the effects of sin and temptation upon us, by that knowledge whereby he knows all things ; but he knows them likewise in a way more suitable for our comfort and relief, by the sufferings and exercises he passed through for us. Hence arises encouragement. We have not an high-priest who cannot be touched with a feeling

of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted even as we are. When I add to this, the consideration of his power, promises, and grace, and that he is exalted on purpose to pity, relieve, and save, I gather courage. With him I dare be free, and am not sorry, but glad, that he knows me perfectly, that not a thought of my heart is hidden from him. For without this infinite and exact knowledge of my disease, how could he effectually administer to my cure? But whither am I ramb-ling? I seem to have lost sight of the angel already. I am now coming back, that if he cannot effectually pity me, he may at least animate and teach me.

In the first place, I take it for granted this angel would think himself a stranger and pilgrim upon earth. He would not forget that his *πολιτευμα* was in heaven. Surely he would look upon all the bustle of human life (further than the design of his mission might connect him with it) with more indifference than we look upon the sports of children, or the amusements of idiots and lunatics, which give us an uneasiness, rather than excite a desire of joining in them. He would judge of every thing around him, by the reference and tendency it had to promote the will of him that sent him; and the most specious or splendid appearances, considered in any other view, would make no impression upon him.

Consequently, as to his own concernment, all his aim and desire would be to fulfil the will of God. All situations would be alike to him; whe-

ther he was commanded, as in the case of Sennacherib, to destroy a mighty army with a stroke; or, as in the case of Hagar, to attend upon a woman, a servant, a slave; both services would be to him equally honourable and important, because he was in both equally pleasing his Lord, which would be his element and his joy, whether he was appointed to guide the reins of empire, or to sweep the streets.

Again, the angel would doubtless exhibit a striking example of benevolence; for being free from selfish bias, filled with a sense of the love of God, and a knowledge of his adorable perfections, his whole heart, and soul, and strength, would be engaged and exerted, both from duty and inclination, to relieve the miseries, and advance the happiness of all around him; and in this he would follow the pattern of Him who doth good to all, commanding his sun to rise, and his rain to fall, upon the just and the unjust;—though, from the same pattern, he would show an especial regard to the household of faith. An angel would take but little part in the controversies, contentions, and broils which might happen in the time of his sojourning here, but would be a friend to all, so far as consistent with the general good.

The will and glory of God being the angel's great view, and having a more lively sense of the realities of an unseen world than we can at present conceive, he would certainly, in the first and chief place, have the success and spread of the glorious gospel at heart. Angels, though not redeemed

with blood, yet feel themselves nearly concerned in the work of redemption. They admire its mysteries. We may suppose them well informed in the works of creation and providence. But (unlike too many men, who are satisfied with the knowledge of astronomy, mathematics, or history) they search and pry into the counsels of redeeming love, rejoice at the conversion of a sinner, and think themselves well employed to be ministering spirits, to minister to the heirs of salvation. It would therefore be his chief delight to espouse and promote their cause, and to employ all his talents and influence in spreading the favour and knowledge of the name of Jesus, which is the only and effectual means of bringing sinners out of bondage and darkness, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

Lastly, Though his zeal for the glory of his Lord would make him willing to continue here till he had finished the work given him to do, he would, I am persuaded, look forward with desire to the appointed moment of his recal, that he might be freed from beholding and mixing with the sin and vanity of those who know not God, render his account with joy, and be welcomed to heaven with a "Well done, good and faithful servant." Surely he would long for this, as a labourer for the setting sun; and would not form any connection with the things of time, which should prompt him to wish his removal protracted for a single hour beyond the period of his prescribed service.

Alas, why am not I more like an angel! My

views in my better judgment are the same. My motives and obligations are even stronger; an angel is not so deeply indebted to the grace of God, as a believing sinner, who was once upon the brink of destruction, has been redeemed with blood, and might justly have been, before now, shut up with the powers of darkness, without hope! Yet the merest trifles are sufficient to debase my views, damp my activity, and impede my endeavours in the Lord's service, though I profess to have no other end or desire which can make a continuance in life worthy my wish.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCCXXXV.

REV. JOHN NEWTON to Miss M——.

DEAR MADAM,

September 18, 1762.

I rejoice to find that the Lord prospers his work in your hearts, and that you can say from experience, he is a faithful and good shepherd.—Oh! happy they who are in such a case, who know for themselves how good it is to draw near unto him, to sit down and rest under his refreshing shadow, and feast upon his pleasant fruits!

Through grace I also continue waiting on him after my feeble measure; and I trust in his love, that, though I sometimes faint, I shall not utterly

fall; though I too often step aside, he will not suffer me to wander quite away.

How happy should we be, could we always believe the glorious things which are spoken to us as children, in the word of him who cannot fail of accomplishing his promise. But are we not fools and slow of heart in this matter? at least I am, and hence proceed my many complaints.—Alas! what a hard heart have I, that can doubt, and repine, and limit the Lord, after all the great things he has shown me. Wretched heart, that can stand it out still, against oaths, and promises, and blood. Methinks I may sum up all my wants and prayers in one sentence—Lord, give me faith! Oh! if faith was in daily exercise, how little would the world, and the things of time and sense, seem in my eyes. What a dreadful thing would sin appear, that spilt my Saviour's blood. And how would my very heart rejoice at the sound of Jesus' name! If I had faith to pierce within the veil, and see what is going forward in yon blessed world, how earnestly should I long to be dissolved that I might join in worship there! and how willingly should I spend and be spent for the gospel's sake. However, though it is not with us as we would wish, we have reason to bless God it is so well with us as it is; that we are not altogether dead in trespasses and sins, strangers and enemies to the glorious gospel of the blessed God. We have reason to be thankful that we know something of our disease and our physician. He who has taken our case in hand will, in his own time, perfect the

cure. An hour is coming on when we shall no more say, I am sick ; we shall see him as he is ; we shall be like him ; we shall weep no more ; all tears shall be wiped from our eyes, and the days of our mourning shall be ended.

Having, therefore, such promises, let us be animated to run the way of the Lord's commandments with an enlarged heart. Let the joy of the Lord be our strength. Opposition, temptation, affliction we must expect ; these things lie in the pathway to glory ; but we may remember him who hath trod the path before us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps. I say, tempted and opposed we may be ; but it is not probable that we shall be spit upon, buffeted, and crucified for him, as he was for us.

We shall have but a taste, at the most, of that bitter cup which *he* drank off to the dregs. And he is near us to support us in our distresses, to carry us through, to make us more than conquerors, and then to put the crown of righteousness and victory on our heads with his own hands. Let us, then, go forth without the camp, bearing his reproach ; let us not hang down our heads like dulrushes, but rather count it all joy if we are called to the honour of suffering disgrace, or any kind of inconvenience, for his name's sake. Above all, let us pray to have our conversation as becometh the gospel of Christ ; that those who speak evil may be ashamed and put to silence, when they behold our meekness, humility, and Christian carriage.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Remember to pray for your unworthy friend.

LETTER CCCXXXVI.

REV. JOHN NEWTON to MR. W——, after a season of severe affliction.

DEAR SIR,

Jan. 25, 1766.

You (and consequently Mrs. W——, for you cannot suffer alone) have lately been in the furnace, and are now brought safely out. I hope you have much to say of the grace, care, and skill of the great Refiner, who watched over you; and that you have lost nothing but dross. Let this experience be treasured up in your hearts for the use of future times. Other trials will come; but you have found the Lord faithful to his promise, and have good encouragement to trust him again. I would take the liberty to address myself particularly to dear Mrs. — upon a theme my heart is well acquainted with. You know your weak side; endeavour to set a double guard of prayer there. Our earthly comforts would be doubly sweet, if we could but venture them without anxiety in the Lord's hands. And where can we lodge them so safely? Is not the first gift, the continuance, the blessing which makes them pleasing, all from him? Was not his design in all this, that we should be happy in them? How

then can we fear that he will threaten them, much less take them away, but with a view to our further benefit? Let us suppose the thing we are most afraid of actually to happen. Can it come a moment sooner, or in any other way than by his appointment? Is he not gracious and faithful to support us under the stroke? Is he not rich enough to give us something better than ever he will take away? Is not the light of his countenance better than life and all its most valued enjoyments? Is not this our time of trial, and are we not travelling towards a land of light?—Methinks, when we view things in the light of eternity, it is much the same whether the separating stroke arrives at the end of seven or seventy years; since, come when it will, it must and will be felt; but one draught of the river of pleasure at God's right hand will make us forget our sorrows for ever; or the remembrance, if any, will only serve to heighten our joys. Farther, what life did he lead whom we call our Master and our Lord? Was not he a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief? Has he marked out one way to heaven with his painful footsteps, and shall we expect, or even wish, to walk in another? With such considerations as these, we should endeavour to arm our minds, and pray to the Lord to fix a sense of them in our hearts, and to renew it from time to time; that, when changes are either feared or felt, we may not be like the people of the world, who have no hope, no refuge, no throne of grace, but may be enabled to glorify

our God in the fire, and give proof that his grace is sufficient for us in every state. It is neither comfortable for ourselves, nor honourable to our profession, to start at every shaking leaf. If we are sensible of this, mourn over our infirmities before the Lord, and faithfully strive in prayer against the fear that easily besets us; he can, and he will, strengthen us with strength in our souls, and make us more than conquerors, according to his sure promise.

A proneness to idolatry is our bosom sin : I have smarted for it. I dare not say I am cured ; yet I would hope the Lord's wonderful interchange of comforts and chastisements have not been wholly lost upon me, but have been accompanied with some measure of his sanctifying grace. At present, that is, ever since my settlement at ———, I have been favoured with an interval of ease. I never had so long and general an exemption from sharp trials. When I consider and feel what I am, I am amazed at his forbearance. Surely I deserve to be visited with breach upon breach. But his compassions are infinite. Yet I must not expect to have always fair weather in a changeable world. I would desire neither to presume that my mountain stands strong, nor yet to afflict myself with needless apprehensions of what a day may bring forth. O that I could improve the present, and cheerfully commit the future to him who does all things wisely and well, and has promised that all shall work together for good !

I am, dear sir,

Your very affectionate and obliged servant.

LETTER CCXXXVII.

REV. JOHN NEWTON to MR. W——.

MY DEAR SIR,

September 14, 1772.

You are hungering and thirsting to feel the power and savour of the truth in your soul, humbling, quickening, strengthening, comforting you, filling you with peace and joy, and enabling you to abound in the fruits of righteousness, which are, by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. Are these your desires? He that has wrought them in you is God; and he will not disappoint you. He would not say, "Open your mouth wide," if he did not design to fill it. O! he gives bountifully; gives like a king. A little is too much for our deserts; but much is too little for his bounty. Let me tell you a heathen story:—It is said, that a man once asked Alexander to give him some money, I think, to portion off a daughter. The king bid him go to his treasurer and demand what he pleased. He went and demanded an enormous sum. The treasurer was startled, said he could not part with so much without an express order, and went to the king, and told him he thought a small part of the money the man had named might serve for the occasion. "No," said the king, "let him have it all. I like that man; he does me honour: he treats me like a king, and proves by what he asks, that he be-

lieves me to be both rich and generous." Come, my friend, let us go to the throne of grace, and put up such petitions as may show that we have honourable views of the riches and bounty of our King. Alas ! I prefer such poor scanty desires, as if I thought he was altogether such a one as myself. Speak a word for me when you are near him ; entreat him to increase my love, faith, humility, zeal, and knowledge, a thousand-fold. Ah ! I am poor and foolish ; I need a great supply ; I cannot dig, and yet am often unwilling to beg.

I am sincerely, dear sir,
Your much obliged and affectionate servant,
J. NEWTON

LETTER CCCXXXVIII.

REV. JOHN NEWTON to MR. COWPER.

MY DEAR SIR, Charles Square, May 6, 1780.

You will have no reason to apply to me Luke, vii. 32. For when you pipe, I am ready to dance ; and when you mourn, a cloud comes over my brow, and a tear stands a tiptoe in my eye. I observe your letters usually begin and end in the allegro strain, and you put the more serious part in the middle : as this seems the fittest place for it, I will try to imitate you, though it will be

something, if either my beginning or my close should entitle me to your smile, except you smile at the presumption of your humble imitator, and recollect the fable of the frog, who tried to imitate the ox.

Do not wonder that I prize your letters. Besides the merit which friendship puts on them, as being yours, you always send me something I should value from a stranger. Some thoughts in your last I shall be the better for, if it be not my own fault. How wonderful is that tincture, that inexpressible something, which gives your sentiments when you speak of yourself so gloomy a cast, while in all other respects it leaves your faculties in full bloom and vigour! How strange that your judgment should be clouded in one point only, and that a point so obvious and strikingly clear to every body who knows you! How strange that a person who considers the earth, the planets, and the sun itself as mere baubles, compared with the friendship and favour of God, their Maker, should think the God who inspired him with such an idea, could ever forsake and cast off the soul which he has taught to love him! How strange is it, I say, that you should hold tenaciously both parts of a contradiction! Though your comforts have been so long suspended, I know not that I ever saw you for a single day since your calamity came upon you, in which I could not perceive as clear and satisfactory evidence, that the grace of God was with you, as I could in your brighter and happier times. In the

midst of all the little amusements, which you call trifling, and which I would be very thankful you can attend to, in your present circumstances, it is as easy to see who has your heart, and which way your desires tend, as to see your shadow when you stand in the sun.

Accept our best love, and believe me to be,
Most affectionately yours,

J. NEWTON.

LETTER CCCXXXIX.

REV. JOHN NEWTON to Miss W——. Intended for her birth-day.

MY DEAR MISS,

March 23, 1773.

In your last you intimated some expectation of receiving a letter from me on or about your birth-day:—"So she shall," thought I, "if we live so long;" and accordingly I made a memorandum in my head, to write to Miss W—— the twenty-third of March, that she may have it on the twenty-fourth, which is her birth-day. Just now I sat down to comply with this order; but how did I stare when, taking up your letter, I found your birth-day was not the twenty-fourth but the fourth. So all my punctuality is thrown away, and all the pretty things I might have tried to say upon the subject of a birth-day are almost three

weeks out of season. Well, I must make the best of it, and congratulate you, not that you are exactly so many years old, (I know not how many,) but so many years and twenty days.

If I thought you did not seek, and in a measure know, the Lord's salvation, I should not congratulate you at all. I have often been struck with the absurdity of worldly people making their birthday a season of joy, unless in the year when they come to age, and are released from the restraints of parents, tutors, and guardians, and at liberty to act just as self dictates. In other respects, should they rejoice every year on a certain day, that they have a year less to live where their hearts and their treasures are fixed, and are a year nearer to their eternity, which they cannot bear to think of? Ah, how many are jovial on their birthday who will at length see cause to wish they had never been born! But you have reason to bless God for your birth, since he has been pleased to make you partaker of a new and heavenly birth, and to admit you into the number of his children. He sent you into the world at such a time, and under such circumstances, as that, in his appointed hour, you might hear and receive the gospel of his grace.

Were it possible you could be informed of the history of all who were born into the world, the same year or the same day with yourself, I mean especially of your own sex, it would give you an affecting view of the mercies by which the Lord has distinguished you from thousands. Many of

them are already in eternity, and perhaps the greater part of these taken away before they knew why they came into the world. Could you visit those of them who are still living, you would find some crippled, deformed, blind, or deaf; some defective in their faculties, some languishing under incurable diseases, some struggling under poverty, destitute of friends or food; some, having been accustomed to evil examples from their infancy, and not being favoured with the means of instruction, are, though young in years, already grown old in sin. Perhaps you would hardly find one in the whole number so remarkably favoured in all respects as yourself. When you had finished your survey, would not your heart adopt and feel the sentiment in the hymn—

Are these thy favours, day by day,
To me above the rest?
Then let me love thee more than they,
And try to serve thee best.

But the chief mercy of all is, that the Lord hath drawn you to seek his face, and to place your happiness in his favour; without this, the possession of all that the earth can afford would be of little worth. May he encourage and animate you to press forward to the prize of your high calling. May his good Spirit teach, warn, and comfort you, and keep you ever mindful that there is no safety but in a continual dependence upon him. Satan is a wathful enemy; he studies our situation and disposition, that he may spread snares

for us to the greatest advantage, and is not only to be dreaded when he fights directly against our faith and peace as a roaring lion, but is often as near and as dangerous when we are ready to think him at a distance. He sometimes lays his schemes with little noise, and prevails before he is perceived. But they that humbly look unto the Lord to keep them, shall be preserved. I hope you will be constant in all the means of grace, especially in secret prayer, and a close attention to the word of God; if these are neglected, or a formal spirit indulged in them, public ordinances may be frequented, and yet the soul grow lean and dry, and get little benefit from them. But if we are aware of our weakness and danger, and look continually to the Lord to hold us up that we may be safe, he will keep our feet out of the net. There are too many professors who live below their privileges; they have every thing of religion but its power and its comforts. But it is your happiness to be acquainted with a favoured few, who approve themselves in good earnest, and follow the Lord with their whole heart, like Caleb of old. I trust the Lord will give you to be like-minded; to walk as a stranger and pilgrim, and to have your heart and conversation in heaven, where Jesus is; then you may well rejoice in every returning birth-day, and say, Now is full salvation nearer than when I first believed.

Believe me to be your affectionate friend.

LETTER CCCXL.

REV. RICHARD CECIL to his WIFE, on the necessity of having fixed hours for devotion.

MY DEAREST LOVE,

Though you have two letters of mine unanswered ; and though I have nothing to say, yet I will take a few moments, which ought to be embraced for *recollection*, to write to you. So that you will do well to recollect, that *this* letter comes neither from a sense of duty, nor a matter of business, but from a pure desire of pleasing you : and you will recollect, that I would rather preach two sermons, than write one letter.

And now, what shall I say ? I think what I began with is the best subject — *recollection*. “Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things ; but one thing is *needful* ;” and that one, needful as it is, will be forgotten, if we do not set aside a portion of our time for the purpose. I feel that all I know and all I teach, will do nothing for my own soul, if I spend my time, as most people do, in business or company—even the *best* company. My soul starves to death in the best company ; and God is often lost in prayers and ordinances. “Enter into thy chamber,” said he, “and shut thy door about thee !” Some words in Scripture are very emphatical. *Shut thy door* means much : it means, shut out, not only nonsense, but business—not only company

abroad, but the company at home. It means—let thy poor soul have a little rest and refreshment; and God have opportunity to speak to thee in a small still voice, or he will speak in thunder.

You and I, my love, ought to understand this, who have heard the loud voice so often, in so many ways. I am persuaded the Lord would have spoken more softly if we would have *shut the door*: nor do I believe the children would have fallen into the fire, nor out of the window, in the mean time. Let us, I say, think of this: for who can tell what the next loud call may say? It has called for our children already, and it may next call for us.

But I will not press this subject, for I recollect your spirits are weak. However, go into thy chamber, and shut the door; and pray for me, that after I have preached so often to this people, I may not be left to undo in private, what I am labouring to do in public.

Be sure, while I ask you never to forget me in your prayers, that you are never forgotten in mine, such as they are; (and which I often fear are more calculated to affront God than please him;) but pray I must, and *I know* that I do not pray in vain nor can you. . . .

LETTER CCXLI.

REV. T. SCOTT to a FRIEND, who had sought his advice on the topics referred to in the commencement of the letter.

Dec. 10, 1795.

I know not what further directions to give you respecting the manner of inquiring after truth, and seeking to have it more deeply impressed on the heart; and, as it were, wrought into the judgment and affections, than are already in print. I find it exceedingly difficult to keep my attention fixed, or to get my heart suitably affected, in reading and meditating upon truths which have become obvious and familiar by daily study; but there are times when I find, that while I try to muse on the subject, *a fire*, as it were, *kindles*, and contemplation terminates in adoring gratitude and admiring love. In general, I think, I have found it advantageous sometimes to read the Scriptures with such exactness, as to weigh every expression, and its connexions, as if I were about to preach on every verse; and then to apply the result to my own case, character, experience, and conduct, as if it had been directly addressed to me—not as a new promise or revelation, but as a message containing warning, caution, reproof, exhortation, encouragement, or direction, according to my previous or present state of mind, and my peculiar circumstances. In short, to make the passages into a kind of sermons, as if about to preach to others, and

then to turn the whole application on myself as far as suited to my case ; as if another, who fully knew me, had been addressing me. At other times I have read a passage more generally, and then selected two or three of the most important observations from it, and endeavoured to employ my mind in meditation on them, and to consider how they bore on the state of my heart, or on my past life, or on those things which I heard or observed in the world or the church ; and to compare them with the variety of sentiment, experience, conduct, or prominent characters, with which we become gradually more and more acquainted. Thus, I have endeavoured to read the Scriptures, and to use them as a touch-stone to distinguish *the precious from the vile*, both at home and abroad. At other times, having perhaps heard or read the opinions of different men on any disputed subject, I have, in my daily reading of the Scriptures, constantly kept those opinions in view, that I might at length form my judgment on which side truth lay. In doing this, I have always aimed to keep my mind from the two extremes,—on the one hand, of giving up my own opinion, from a kind of false humility, and deference for men, without being previously convinced that I had been mistaken ; and, on the other hand, of assuming my opinion to be truth, so as to exclude light, especially if it came from an enemy, or a person not entitled to much deference, so that I have always aimed to be open to conviction, to bring every man's probable opinion to the touch-stone, and to give it a fair trial, if not tried before ;

but not to receive it without plainly perceiving its agreement with the Scripture: and, at the same time, to aim, that my heart might be suitably affected with the conclusions of my understanding—in which I have principally failed. But, a spirit of continual prayer mixed with reading, has been my principal help in all these things; without which either self-wisdom or indolent dependence on human teaching will surely prevail.

LETTER CCCXLII.

MISS H. MORE to a FRIEND. How to live “*in* the world,”
and not be “*of* the world.”

MY DEAR SIR,

Cowslip Green, 1795.

I will answer your question, “whether I think it is or is not your duty to indulge the gaiety of your temper among strangers?” with the plainest sincerity and truth, according to my judgment. I have no doubt that it is a part of Christianity to convert every natural talent to a religious use, and, therefore, I declare I think you are serving God, by making yourself agreeable, upon your own views and principles (for the motive is the act) to worldly but well-disposed people, who would never be attracted to religion by grave and severe divines, even if such ever fell in their way. Those who can adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour by cheerful manners, defeat the end of the Giver by assum-

ing a contrary character. It is an honest bait by which they will at last be attracted to like you for some better part of you. I do not mean that their liking you much signifies, except in so far as, through your medium, they be brought to relish religion. How many have been induced to read Cowper's 'Task,' by 'John Gilpin,'—'Pascal's Thoughts' by his 'Provincial Letters,'—and Doddridge's Works by his Letters. By the by, Doddridge is a case in point—I have heard Sir James Stonehouse say, he never knew a man of so gay a temper as Doddridge. One great use that may follow your carrying this cheerfulness into worldly company is this—if they have sense and reflection, they will discern what sacrifices you must make, and what conquests religion enables you to achieve over yourself, when they find that gaiety does not seduce you from the rigour of your principles, and the severity of your morality. They will find out that you are not driven to religion because you have no taste for that wit and elegance which they rate so highly ; and that your nonconformity to the world does not spring from your having no taste for its enjoyments, but because you know that the friendship of the world is enmity with God. Dead and buried as they are in luxury and indulgence, it is only by such casual discoveries as these that they can ever get the smallest glimpse of the meaning of "plucking out right eyes, and cutting off right hands." To such people, religion must be made as it were tangible, palatable, visible ;

else they are apt to think it but an idle speculation.

On the other hand, I have told Lady S—— that there is this danger attending the society of religious people who are gay and pleasant—that it is apt to indispose worldly minds towards other religious persons, who may be equally good, though they have a severer cast of temper; and I have desired her not to suspect the next religious man she meets of being either a drone or a hypocrite, because he may be either constitutionally grave, or may think it right to assume an exterior of greater strictness.

Since writing the above, I have just got a letter from my old friend Lady S—— on other business. You are named in it. I have a great mind to send you that part, as it will show you that your conduct made no wrong impression. Little as she says, however, I am half afraid of sending it, as I am in disgrace with your sage friend H—— from a parallel conduct, when I thought, as now, I was doing a mighty wise thing. If I am wrong, tell me so, for I am wrong upon system. I have not myself any vain curiosity to know what people at large think of me; but if there is any one over whom their good opinion may give me useful influence, I think it of importance. I intend this letter to convince you of my sincere friendship, if not of my wisdom. Of all compliments, I abhor religious compliments; and in writing to you on this subject, I have tried to speak as if it were of another

person, and not of yourself. And now in return what shall I do? These people come to me: that I cannot help—but I do not go to them. My neighbour the Duchess of — is not well, and wants me; but I can do her no good. Here I do but little, but a little is something. I think I have done with the aristocracy. I am no longer a debtor to the Greeks, but I am so to my poor barbarians.

God bless you, my dear Sir, prays,

Your obliged and affectionate,

HANNAH MORE.

LETTER CCCXLIII.

REV. ROBERT HALL to a FRIEND in deep perplexity, as to his religious state.

DEAR SIR,

Leicester, April 20, 1809.

I am much concerned to learn the unhappy state of your mind respecting religion. You may depend upon no one seeing the letter but myself; and I wish it were in my power to say any thing that might be of use. Of this I have very little hope; for the adage might in too great a degree be applied unto me—"Physician, heal thyself," as I labour under much darkness and despondency respecting my religious prospects, through the prevalence of indwelling corruptions. What then, my dear Sir, can I say to you, or any other? I would recommend to you, above all things, to have

recourse to prayer—to fervent, importunate, persevering prayer. Take no denial: if you cannot pray long, pray often. Take the *utmost pains* in preparing your heart, and in the exercises of the closet; for, surely, an assurance of the forgiveness of sin, the light of God's Spirit, and the animating hope of glory, are worth all the labour and infinitely more than all, we are capable of using to attain them. They are heaven upon earth. From what I know by experience, though it is not with me now as in months past, the enjoyment of God throws every other enjoyment, that can be realized or conceived, at an infinite distance. Fix it in your mind, my dear friend, as a most *certain* truth, that there is nothing deserves to be pursued for a moment, but in *subordination to* God and *for* God; and then act accordingly, and you will probably soon find a strange change for the better. Exposed, as you necessarily are, to the society of many who have either no religion, or feel but little of its vital power, you are in peculiar danger of forming slight ideas of its importance; of being taught to look upon it as a secondary thing, an occasional law, whose authority is to be interposed like the law of the land, to regulate other things; instead of looking upon it as a vital, prevailing principle of the heart and life. Many, it is to be feared, never attain the blessings of religion, because they never form that estimate of its dignity which is consonant with the oracles of God. Did it not seem like presumption, I should earnestly recommend the daily perusal, besides the Scriptures, (which I take it for

granted you cannot omit,) of some practical and experimental divinity. We have great store of it: Doddridge's "Rise and Progress," his and Watts's "Sermons;" and, above all, if I may speak from my own experience, the wonderful Howe—particularly his "Blessedness of the Righteous," his "Living Temple," (the latter part,) his treatise on "Delighting in God." Perhaps you will say you have not *time* for this; but here the question recurs again—what is of the most importance for a creature that is to live for ever;—to be rich in this world, or to be rich towards God? I hope you will pardon the liberty I have taken, from a regard to the motive; which, you will do me the justice to believe, is pure and disinterested.

I remain, my dear Sir,

Yours affectionately,

ROBERT HALL.

LETTER CCCXLIV.

REV. ROBERT HALL to a FRIEND, under similar circumstances.

MY DEAR SIR,

Leicester, July 17, 1809.

I duly received yours. Be assured I sympathize with you in your spiritual trials, having had a large share of them myself. I wish I could adopt the language of Dido to the Trojans throughout—*Haud ignora mali miseris succurrere disco*. The *haud ignora mali* is fully applicable to myself; but

I am afraid I have not yet learnt the art of suggesting what may be useful to others in similar circumstances. I want "the tongue of the learned, that I may be able to speak a word in season to him that is weary." I congratulate you on retaining your religious sensibility. The most dangerous spiritual symptom is apathy, or a stupid indifference to our real situation. While we have feeling enough to complain, we give unequivocal indications of life, however disordered its functions, or languid its actions may be. What advice, my dear Sir, can I possibly give you, but what your own good sense will suggest—that of *giving all diligence, and following on?* "Then," says the prophet, "shall ye know, if you *follow on* to know the Lord." Set a firm resolution against the indulgence of sin in any form. I know you too well to suspect external irregularities; but we are both fully convinced, "the commandment is exceeding broad;" and that, if we would walk in the light of God's blessed countenance, we must keep the heart with all diligence, or as the expression signifies, "above all keeping." You will doubtless find your account in the serious, punctual, undeviating attention to private prayer, and reading of the Scriptures.

I feel a pleasing confidence that you are too much impressed with the importance of religion, to suffer these exercises to be superseded by any worldly enjoyments, or to be attended to in a slight, perfunctory manner, resting in the *opus operatum*, instead of improving them as means of nearness to God, and growth in grace. Would it not be advis-

able for you to give yourself up publicly to the Lord? Might not your solemn engagement to be his, in the ties of a Christian profession, have a happy influence on the train of your sentiments and conduct; not to say, that if you truly love the Lord Jesus Christ, you must necessarily feel a desire to keep his commandments. I am glad to hear you are happy with Mrs. ——. Please to remember me affectionately to Mrs. —, to —'s family in all its branches, to Mrs—, and all inquiring friends.

I am, dear Sir,

With great respect, yours, &c.

ROBERT HALL.

LETTER CCCXLV.

MRS. NEWELL to a FRIEND, upon the death of a sister.

Haverhill, Sept. 1811.

Forgive, my dear M——, the liberty I take in addressing you in this manner. From my first acquaintance with you, I have felt deeply interested for your happiness. Nothing but an affectionate regard for you, would induce me to write to you on a subject which the world will undoubtedly ridicule, but which engages the attention and constitutes the felicity of the holy inhabitants of heaven. This subject is the religion of the gospel—a subject which is infinitely interesting to us both. You have of late witnessed a scene, trying indeed, and

solemn as eternity. You have watched the sick-bed, you have heard the expiring groans of your beloved sister. You fondly hope that she was interested in the covenant of redemption, and is now perfectly happy in the enjoyment of her God in heaven. When standing by the dying bed of this dear sister, say, my friend, did you not ardently wish for piety similar to hers; for that faith which could triumph over the horrors of a dying hour? Was the hope then cherished that you should meet her in yonder world, when the trials of this short life are over? And did this hope support your sinking spirits in the trying hour of separation? She is gone for ever; but we are still prisoners of hope. Could we now draw back the covering of the tomb, and listen to her language, how earnestly would she beseech us to become reconciled to God, and devote our lives wholly to his service. My dear M——, these are not idle dreams. If we reflect for a moment, we feel conscious that there is an immortal principle within, which will exist when time and nature die. This principle is corrupted by sin, and without the sanctifying grace of God, we should be unhappy, even though admitted to heaven. Do but examine the feelings of your heart one hour, and you cannot for a moment doubt the truth of this assertion. How important then that we should have this work of grace begun in our hearts, before it is too late. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." Tomorrow our probation may be closed, and we may be irrecoverably lost. M——, my heart is full. What

inducements can I offer you to receive Jesus into your heart, and willingly sacrifice your all for him? Oh! think of the worth of the soul, the price paid to redeem it, the love of Immanuel, your obligations to live to him, the joys prepared for the righteous;—and, oh, think of the torments in reserve for the finally impenitent, and be induced to flee from the wrath to come. If nothing in providence prevents, before the return of another autumn, Harriet will be a stranger in a strange land. I go, my friend, where heathens dwell, far from the companions of my playful years, far from the dear land of my nativity. My contemplated residence will be, not among the refined and cultivated, but among females degraded and uncivilized, who have never heard of the religion of Jesus. How would it gladden my sad heart, in the trying hour of my departure, could I but leave a dear circle of females of my own age, engaged for God, and eminent for their usefulness in Haverhill. Well, I hope to find a circle of Hindoo sisters in India, interested in that religion which many of my companions reject, though blest with innumerable privileges. But my friend M—— will not treat with indifference this religion. O no! I will cherish the fond hope, that she will renounce the world, become a follower of Immanuel, and be unwearied in her exertions to spread the triumphs of the cross through the world. I must leave you, my dear M——, with God. May you become a living witness for him! When our journey through this barren wilderness is ended, may we meet in heaven!

HARRIET.

LETTER CCCXLVI.

HENRY KIRKE WHITE to MR. K. SWANN.

MY DEAR KIRKE, Winteringham, April 6, 1805.

Your complaint of the lukewarmness of your affections towards spiritual things, is a very common one with Christians. We all feel it; and if it be attended with an earnest desire to acquit ourselves in this respect, and to recover our wonted fervour, it is a complaint indicative of our faithfulness. In cases of Christian experience, I submit my own opinion to any body's, and have too serious a distrust of it myself, to offer it as a rule or maxim of unquestionable authority; but I have found, and think, that the best remedy against lukewarmness, is an obstinate persisting in prayer, until our affections be moved; and a regular habit of going to religious duties with a prepared and meek heart, thinking more of obtaining communion with God, than of spending so many minutes in seeking it. Thus, when we pray, we must not kneel down with the idea that we are to spend so many minutes in supplication, and after the usual time has elapsed, go about our regular business; we must remind ourselves that we have an object in prayer, and that until that object be attained, that is, until we are satisfied that our Father hears us, we are not to conceive that our duty is performed, although we may be in the posture of prayer for an hour.

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SECTION III.

ADMONITORY LETTERS, TO THE APOSTATE, BACKSLIDING,
AND UNBELIEVING.

LETTER CCCXLVII.

LAURENCE SAUNDERS, the martyr, to an APOSTATE from
the truth.

September 20, 1554.

In my own name and in the name of many others, your old familiars and acquaintance, I do write unto you in heaviness of heart, for that we have heard of your fall. Oh, how much better had it been for you never to have set your hand to the plough, than negligently to look back ; yea, and foolishly to follow the plough that tilleth not God's field, but turneth up the roots of that seed, which in times past you have sown. Alas ! how foolish a builder were you, that would enterprise to build upon the rock Christ, seeing in yourself not only the lack of those things which are required to the finishing of that work, but also the lack of a will to have them ; as appears by that you go about to overthrow that little which you seemed to have mightily builded upon 'that rock. How foolish a virgin have you declared yourself to be, which have gone forth to meet the

bridegroom, and tarried so long for his coming, not having oil in store, but are now driven, when you hear the voice of the forerunner, to seek at them that sell! You banquetted with the children of the bridegroom, so long as he was with us; but now he is gone, you leave us alone to fast! You were contented to be fed at Christ's hand with the five thousand; but when he willeth you not to seek the meat that perisheth, you depart! The children of Israel were much to be blamed, for that they desired to be in Egypt again, and yet was there lack and labour then more in the desert than yours now in London.

Alas! wretched man, what hath caused thee thus to cast away thyself, once knowing the truth, and to take in hand to be a minister in antichrist's church? Art thou so soon weary of the heavenly manna; and so ready to return to thy old vomit again? We thought thou hadst been so clean escaped through the word of grace, that thou hadst been a worthy man; to be a comfort to them that stand, a succour to the weak, and a help to them that fall, and art thou now rolled in thy filthy puddle again, and art become a helper to put others into the same? Oh! more than damnable doings, the forgiveness whereof far passes the hope of man! And were it not that things impossible to man are possible with God, we should utterly despair of thy return.

But, knowing that with God there is no impossibility, we will not only advertise thee to remember from whence thou art fallen, that thou mayst seek

to rise again; but we will also pray that he, to whom thy return is possible, will vouchsafe of his infinite mercies to work it in thee. Thou hast, with Judas, sold thy most loving and gentle Master; repent thee with Peter, and no doubt thou shalt find mercy.

To fall, is a thing annexed to the corrupt nature of man; but to lie still in thy filthy puddle of perdition, is to despise God, the author and first maker of nature. To fall into the darkness of error, is a point of man's ignorance; but to walk on still in darkness, is to love darkness more than light. To wink at the brightness of the sun, is a weakness of the eyes; but to fly the light is to be of the night. To leave the rough way that leadeth unto life, and to walk in the pleasant way that leadeth unto perdition, is to love this life; but not to leave that way when we are warned, is to despise the life to come. Briefly, to leave the good things undone, that God commands, and to do that evil which he forbids, is to deserve everlasting damnation at his hand, who rewards every man according to his work; but not to repent of that evil when God calls by his means, is to kindle the wrath of God against the impenitent and obstinate sinner.

Lest you, therefore, should be found a despiser of God, the author of nature; a lover of darkness more than light; not of the day, but altogether of the night; a lover of this life, and a hater of the life to come; and finally such a one as would kindle the wrath of God against you, repent, and come again to Christ. Remember what joy there

is in heaven among the angels at the conversion of a sinner. Forget not thy merciful spouse, who would not cast off the adulterous Israel, and married her to himself.

Be mindful of that loving Lord, who hath said, I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he convert and live; and in what day soever the sinner doth repent him of his sin from the bottom of his heart, I will remember his iniquity no more. ⁽¹⁾ What should separate us from the love of this Lord? What should make us to fly from this our Captain? Should the weariness of an arm? Should the lack of such things as fancy would have? Better it were for us to enter into life with weary arms and thin cheeks, than with lovely countenances and lusty limbs to be cast into hell. Make not provision for the flesh with the loss of your soul. Believe him who hath promised all things necessary to them that seek the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof. He hath not at any time deceived you, why then should you seek such shameful shifts to make provision for the flesh?

Have not you yourself had experience of the care that he takes for them that put their trust in him? And now why are you fallen from him for the belly's sake?

This I have written to call you back again, if you be not clean gone out of the way; but if you be so given over to error, that you think light to be darkness, and darkness to be light; good to be evil,

(¹) Ezekiel, xviii.

and evil to be good ; Christ to be Belial, and Belial to be Christ ; the temple of God to be the synagogue of Satan, and the synagogue of Satan to be the temple of God ; then I have nothing to say unto you, but the Lord confound you and all such. But with God's grace we trust to hear better of you. (')

LETTER CCCXLVIII.

LADY JANE GREY to MASTER HARDING, who had recently recanted to Popery, and afterwards became the opponent of Jewel.

So oft as I call to mind the dreadful and fearful saying of God, "That he which layeth hold upon the plough and looketh back, is not meet for the kingdom of heaven;" and on the other side, the comfortable words of our Saviour Christ to all those that, forsaking themselves, do follow him, I cannot but marvel at thee, and lament thy case, who seemedst sometime to be the lively member of Christ, but now the deformed imp of the devil ; sometime the beautiful temple of God, but now the stinking and filthy kennel of Satan ; sometime the unspotted spouse of Christ, but now the unshamed-faced paramour of antichrist ; sometime

(') " This letter is thought of some, albeit not certainly known, to be written by M. Saunders."—*Coverdale*.

my faithful brother, but now a stranger and apostate ; sometime a stout Christian soldier, but now a cowardly runaway.

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Oh wretched and unhappy man ! what art thou but dust and ashes ? And wilt thou resist thy Maker that fashioned thee and framed thee ? Wilt thou now forsake him that called thee from the custom-gathering among the Romish antichristians, to be an ambassador and messenger of his eternal word ? He that first framed thee, and since thy first creation and birth preserved thee, nourished and kept thee, yea, and inspired thee with the spirit of knowledge, I cannot say of grace, shall he not now possess thee ? Darest thou deliver up thyself to another, being not thine own, but his ? How canst thou, having knowledge, or how durst thou neglect the law of the Lord, and follow the vain traditions of men ? and whereas thou hast been a public professor of his name, become now a defacer of his glory ?

Wilt thou refuse the true God, and worship the invention of man, the golden calf, the harlot of Babylon, the Romish religion, that abominable idol, the most wicked mass ? Wilt thou torment again, rend and tear the most precious body of our Saviour Christ with thy bodily and fleshly teeth ? Wilt thou take upon thee to offer up any sacrifice unto God for our sins, considering, that “ Christ offered up himself,” as Paul saith, “ upon the cross, a lively sacrifice once for all ?” Can neither the punishment of the Israelites, which for their idol-

atry they so oft received, nor the terrible threatenings of the prophets, nor the curses of God's own mouth, make thee fear to honour any other God than him? Dost thou so regard him that spared not his dear and only Son for thee, so diminishing, yea, utterly extinguishing his glory, that thou wilt attribute the praise and honour due unto him to the idols, which have mouths and speak not, eyes and see not, ears and hear not, which shall perish with them that made them?

But thou wilt say, thou doest it for a good intent! —O sink of sin! O child of perdition! Dost thou dream therein of a good intent where thy conscience beareth thee witness of God's threatened wrath against thee? How did Saul, who disobeyed the word of the Lord for a good intent, but was thrown from his worldly and temporal kingdom? Shalt thou then, that dost deface God's honour and rob him of his right, inherit the eternal and heavenly kingdom?

Wilt thou, for a good intent, dishonour God, offend thy brother, and endanger thy soul, wherefore Christ hath shed his most precious blood? Wilt thou, for a good intent, pluck Christ out of heaven, and make his death void, and deface the triumph of his cross, by offering him up daily? Wilt thou, either for fear of death, or hope of life, deny and refuse thy God, who enriched thy poverty, healed thy infirmity, and yielded to thee his victory, if thou couldst have kept it? Dost thou not consider that the thread of thy life hangeth upon

him that made thee, who can, as his will is, either twine it harder to last the longer, or untwine it again to break it the sooner ?

But thou wilt say, I will not break unity. What not the unity of Satan and his members ! not the unity of darkness, the agreement of antichrist and his adherents ! Nay, thou deceivest thyself with the fond imagination of such a unity as is among the enemies of Christ. Were not the false prophets in unity ? Were not Joseph's brethren and Jacob's sons in unity ? Were not the heathen, as the Amalekites, the Perizzites, and Jebusites in unity ? Were not the Scribes and Pharisees in unity ? Doth not king David testify, "They have taken counsel in unity against the Lord ?" Yea, thieves, murderers, conspirators have their unity. But what unity ? Tully saith of amity, "There is no friendship excepting among good men." But mark, my friend, yea, friend, if thou be not God's enemy, there is no unity but where Christ knitteth the knot among such as be his. Yea, be well assured, that where his truth is resident, there is verified what he himself saith, "I am not come to send peace on the earth, but a sword ; to set one against another, the son against the father, and the daughter against the mother-in-law." Deceive not thyself, therefore, with the glittering and glorious name of unity, for antichrist hath his unity, not yet in deed, but in name.

The agreement of ill men is not unity, but conspiracy. Thou hast heard some threatenings,

some curses, and some admonitions out of the Scriptures, to those that love themselves above Christ. Thou hast heard also the sharp and biting words to those that deny him for love of life. Saith he not, "He that denieth me before men, I will deny him before my Father in heaven?" ⁽¹⁾ And to the same effect with Paul, "It is impossible that they which were once lightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted of the good word of God, if they fall and slide away, crucifying to themselves the Son of God afresh, and making of him a mocking-stock, should be renewed again by repentance." ⁽²⁾ And again saith he, "If we shall willingly sin after we have received the knowledge of his truth, there is no oblation left for sin, but the terrible expectation of judgment and fire which shall devour the adversaries." Thus St. Paul wrote, and this thou readest, and dost not quake and tremble?

Well, if these terrible and thundering threatenings cannot stir thee to cleave unto Christ, and forsake the world, yet let the sweet consolations and promises of the Scriptures, let the example of Christ and his apostles, holy martyrs, and confessors, encourage thee to take fast hold by Christ. Hearken what he saith, "Blessed are ye when men revile you, and persecute you for my sake; rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you." ⁽³⁾ Hear what Isaiah the prophet saith,

⁽¹⁾ Matt. x.

⁽²⁾ Heb. vi.

⁽³⁾ Matt. v.

“Fear not the curse of men, be not afraid of their blasphemies, for worms and moths shall eat them up like cloth and wool ; but my righteousness shall endure for ever, and my saving health from generation to generation. What art thou then that fearest a mortal man, the child of man, that fadeth away like a flower, and forgettest the Lord that made thee, that spread out the heavens, and laid the foundation of the earth ? I am thy Lord thy God, that make the sea to rage, and be still, whose name is the Lord of Hosts. I shall put my word in thy mouth, and defend thee with the turning of my hand.”⁽¹⁾

And our Saviour Christ saith to his disciples, “They shall accuse you, and bring you before princes and rulers for my name’s sake, and some of you they shall persecute and kill ; but fear you not, nor care you what you shall say, for it is the spirit of your Father that speaketh within you. Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Lay up treasure for yourselves, where no thief cometh nor moth corrupteth. Fear not them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul ; but fear him that hath power to destroy both soul and body. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own ; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.”

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Return, return again into Christ’s war, and, as

(1) Isaiah. li.

becomes a faithful warrior, put on that armour which St. Paul teaches to be most necessary for a Christian man. "And above all things take to you the shield of faith, and be ye provoked by Christ's own example to withstand the devil, to forsake the world, and to become a true and faithful member of his mystical body, who spared not his own body for our sins." (1)

Throw down yourself with the fear of his threatened vengeance for this so great and heinous offence of apostacy, and comfort yourself on the other part with the mercy, blood, and promise of him that is ready to turn unto you whensoever you turn unto him. Disdain not to come again with the lost son, seeing you have so wandered with him. Be not ashamed to turn again with him from the swill of strangers to the delicacies of your most benign and loving Father, acknowledging that you have sinned against heaven and earth; against heaven, by staining the glorious name of God, and causing his most sincere and pure word to be evil spoken of through you; against earth, by offending so many of your weak brethren, to whom you have been a stumbling-block through your sudden sliding.

Be not abashed to come home again with Mary, and weep bitterly with Peter, not only with shedding the tears of your bodily eyes, but also pouring out the streams of your heart, to wash away out of the sight of God the filth and mire of your offensive fall. Be not abashed to say with the publican,

(1) Ephesians, vi.

“ Lord, be merciful to me a sinner.” Remember the horrible story of Julian of old, and the lamentable case of Spira of late, whose case, methinks, should be yet so green in your remembrance, that being a thing of our time you should fear the like inconvenience seeing you are fallen into the like offence. (1)

Last of all, let the lively remembrance of the last day be always before your eyes, remembering the terror that such shall be in at that time, with the runagates and fugitives from Christ, who setting more by the world than by heaven, more by their life than by him that gave them life, did shrink, yea, did clean fall away from him that forsook them not; and contrariwise, the inestimable joys prepared for them, who, fearing no peril, nor dreading death, have manfully fought and victoriously triumphed over all power of darkness, over hell, death, and damnation, through their most redoubted Captain, Christ, who now stretches out his arms to receive you, ready to fall upon your neck and kiss you; and last of all, to feast you with the dainties and delicacies of his own precious blood, which undoubtedly, if it might stand with his determinate purpose, he would shed again, rather than that you should be lost. To whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour, praise, and glory everlasting.

(1) Francis Spira was an Italian of rank, who having embraced the doctrines of the Reformation, subsequently apostatized from the faith, and shortly after died in the most bitter agonies of despair.

Be constant, be constant ; fear not for any pain,
Christ hath redeemed thee, and heaven is thy gain.

LETTER CCCXLIX.

JOHN HOOPER, Bishop of Gloucester, "to one that was fallen from the known truth of the gospel to antichrist and his damnable religion."

Grace, mercy, and peace of conscience, be multiplied in all penitent hearts.

Dear brother in Christ Jesus, it is not long since I was informed what love and fervent zeal you have heretofore borne to God's true religion, appearing as well by your life and conversation, as by absenting yourself from the idolaters' temple and congregation of false worshippers. But now, alas! through the devilish persuasions and wicked counsel of worldly men, you have declined from your former profession, building again that which before you destroyed, and so are become a trespasser, bearing a stranger's yoke with the unbelievers. Of which ever since I was informed, I have been marvellously moved with inward affections, much lamenting so great and sudden a change, as to be turned from him that called you in the grace of Christ, unto the dissimulation of wicked hypocrites, which, as St. Paul saith, is nothing else, but that there are some which trouble you, intending to make you like as they are, even lovers

of themselves, whose hearts are wedded to the perishing treasures of this world, wherein is their whole joy and felicity, contrary to St. John, who saith : “ See that ye love not the world, neither those things which are in the world.” But they as men without ears, and having hearts without understanding, neither weigh the terrible threatenings of God against such offenders, and the most woful punishment due for the same, nor yet consider the loving admonition and calling of God, who both teaches how to avoid his wrath, and also by what means to attain salvation.

Wherefore, dear brother, I humbly beseech you, even by the mercifulness of God, and as you tender your own salvation, to give ear no longer to their pestilent persuasions, but even now forthwith to repent, and have no longer fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, neither fashion you yourself again like unto the world. Delight not in the friendship thereof, for all such are the enemies of God. Grieve not any longer the Holy Spirit of God, by whom ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Acknowledge your offence, and from whence you are fallen ; prostrate yourself before God ; asking mercy for Christ’s sake. Mourn with Mary Magdalen, lament with David, cry with Jonah, weep with Peter, and make no tarrying to turn to the Lord, whose pitiful eyes attend to wipe away the tears from every troubled conscience. Such is his entire love toward all those that turn unto him, making them this sweet promise, confirmed by a mighty and vehement kind of speak-

ing: "Tell them, as truly as I live," saith he, "I will not the death of a sinner, but much rather that he turn from his evil ways and live. Turn you, turn you from your ungodly ways, O ye of the house of Israel; O wherefore will ye die?" Behold, ye are here forgiven, your sin is blotted out, and the most joyful countenance of God turned again towards you.

What now remains? Verily this, that you from henceforth keep circumspect watch, and become a follower of Christ sustaining for his name's sake, all such adversities as shall be measured unto you by the sufferance of God our heavenly Father, who so cares for us, that not one hair of our heads shall perish without his will. Who also, considering the tender and weak faith of his children, not able as yet to stand against the force of antichrist's tyranny, gives them this loving liberty; "When ye be persecuted in one city flee to another." O most tender compassion of Christ! how careful is he over his people; who would not now, rather than offend so merciful a God, flee this wicked realm, as your most Christian brother and many others have done, or else with boldness of heart, and patience of spirit, bear manfully the cross even unto death, as divers of our brethren have done before us, as is declared at large in Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, which I pass over and come to our Saviour Christ, whose example for our singular comfort St. Paul encourages us to follow, saying: "Let us also, seeing that we are compassed with so great a multitude of witnesses, lay away all that presses

down, and the sin that hangs on, and let us run with patience unto the battle that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith ; who, for the joy that was set before him, abode the cross and despised the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”—“ From whence he shall come shortly,” saith St. John, “ and his rewards with him, to give every man according as his deed shall be. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that their power may be in the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates unto the city, where they, saith Isaiah, shall have their pleasure in the Lord, who will carry them on high above the earth, and will feed them with the heritage of Jacob their father, for the Lord’s own mouth hath so promised.”

Thus I have been bold to write unto you for the Christian love’s sake that I bear to you, whose salvation I wish as mine own, beseeching God that your whole spirit, soul, and body may be kept faultless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Your brother in Christ,

JOHN HOOPER.

LETTER CCCL.

REV. GEORGE WHITFIELD to a repentant BACKSLIDER, who had written to unfold to him his state of mind.

DEAR SIR,

Edinburgh, July 26, 1742.

I just now received and read your letter. It much affected me. It bespeaks the language of an uneasy

restless heart. In reading it, I thought of the great Austin, who used, when he prayed against lust, secretly to wish that his prayer might not be answered, and yet he made a most eminent saint, and shone in the church as a star of the first magnitude. I likewise thought how our Saviour would receive you, if here on earth ; even as he received and answered the poor woman taken in adultery.—I am sure he would say, “ Neither do I condemn thee.” Another text offers itself, “ I will heal their backslidings, and love them freely.” God does not say, I will heal thy backsliding for any certain term of years, but I will heal thy backslidings in general. Dear sir, if you have been a backslider these fifty years, nay, was it possible for you to have been a backslider a thousand years, yet if with hearty repentance and true faith you turn unto him, he will abundantly pardon you. O, dear sir, if any one had need to despair of mercy, I had ; but Jesus has washed me in his blood, and I know that my Redeemer liveth. Your temptations and atheism, and hard thoughts of God, do not surprise me. Dear sir, what else can be expected from a heart desperately wicked, and deceitful above all things ? Dear sir, let all this drive you to the fountain which is open for sin and all uncleanness. I once, in your circumstances, thought Christ was hard-hearted ; but now I find, nay have long since found, that his heart is full of love. Take courage, dear sir ; draw near to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Return, thou wandering prodigal, thy heavenly Father

is running to meet thee.—Come back, thou fluttering dove, Jesus is ready to take thee into the ark. May God bless this to you ! If he does, I will bless his name. I am a vile sinner, and have need to lie low before him, whom I have pierced by my transgression and unprofitableness, times without number. In his blood and righteousness I find perpetual refuge. Many in these parts are flying to him. May you, sir, add to the happy number. You are but a sinner, and Jesus died for sinners. Come and welcome to Jesus Christ. I expect to remain in Scotland a few months, and hope to be your way, if the Lord direct. If your way should be directed hither, I should be glad to see you ; if not, you are welcome to write to me. As my multiplicity of affairs will admit, you shall be answered by, dear sir,

Your truly affectionate friend
and servant in Christ,
G. W.

LETTER CCCLI.

REV. JOHN NEWTON to an INFIDEL.

DEAR SIR,

1758.

I suppose you will receive many congratulations on your recovery from your late dangerous illness ; most of them perhaps more sprightly and better turned, but none, I persuade myself, more sincere and affectionate than mine. I beg you

would prepare yourself by this good opinion of me, before you read further ; and let the reality of my regard excuse what you may dislike in my manner of expressing it.

When a person is returned from a doubtful distant voyage, we are naturally led to inquire into the incidents he has met with, and the discoveries he has made. Indulge me in a curiosity of this kind, especially as my affection gives me an interest and concern in the event. You have been, my friend, upon the brink, the very edge of an eternal state ; but God has restored you back to the world again. Did you meet with, or have you brought back, nothing new ? Did nothing occur to stop or turn your usual train of thought ? Were your apprehensions of invisible things exactly the same in the height of your disorder, when you were cut off from the world and all its engagements, as when you were in perfect health, and in the highest enjoyment of your own inclinations ? If you answer me, “ Yes, all things are just the same as formerly, the difference between sickness and health only excepted ;” I am at a loss how to reply. I can only sigh and wonder ; sigh, that it should be thus with any, that it should be thus with you, whom I dearly love ; and wonder, (since this unhappy case, strange as it seems in one view, is yet so frequent,) why it was not always thus with myself ; for long and often it was just so. Many a time, when sickness had brought me, as we say, to death’s door, I was as easy and insensible as the sailor, who, in the height of a storm, should presume to sleep upon the top of

the mast, quite regardless that the next tossing wave might plunge him into the raging ocean, beyond all possibility of relief. But at length a day came, which, though the most terrible day I ever saw, I can now look back upon with thankfulness and pleasure: I say the time came, when in such a helpless extremity, and under the expectation of immediate death, it pleased God to command the veil from my eyes, and I saw things in some measure as they really were. Imagine with yourself a person trembling upon the point of a dreadful precipice, a powerful and inexorable enemy eager to push him down, and an assemblage of all that is horrible waiting at the bottom for his fall; even this will give you but a faint representation of the state of my mind at that time. Believe me, it was not a whim or a dream, which changed my sentiments and conduct, but a powerful conviction, which will not admit the least doubt; an evidence which, like that I have of my own existence, I cannot call in question without contradicting all my senses. And though my case was in some respects uncommon, yet something like it is known by one and another every day: and I have myself conversed with many, who, after a course of years spent in defending Deistical principles, or indulging libertine practices, when they have thought themselves confirmed in their schemes by the cool assent of what they then deemed impartial reason, have been, like me, brought to glory in the cross of Christ, and to live by that faith which they had before slighted and opposed. By these instances I know that nothing is

too hard for the Almighty. The same power which humbled me, can undoubtedly bring down the most haughty infidel upon earth ; and as I likewise know, that, to show his power, he is often pleased to make use of weak instruments, I am encouraged, notwithstanding the apparent difficulty of succeeding, to warn those over whom friendship or affection gives me any influence, of the evil and the danger of a course of life formed upon the prevailing maxims of the world. So far as I neglect this, I am unfaithful in my professions both to God and man.

I shall not at present trouble you in an argumentative way. If, by dint of reasoning, I could effect some change in your notions, my arguments, unless applied by a superior power, would still leave your heart unchanged and untouched. A man may give his assent to the gospel, and be able to defend it against others, and yet not have his own spirit truly influenced by it. This thought I shall leave with you, that if your scheme be not true to a demonstration, it must necessarily be false ; for the issue is too important to make a doubt on the dangerous side tolerable. If the Christian could possibly be mistaken, he is still upon equal terms with those who pronounce him to be so ; but if the Deist be wrong, (that is, if we are in the right,) the consequence to him must be unavoidable and intolerable. This, you will say, is a trite argument : I own it ; but beaten as it is, it will never be worn out or answered.

Permit me to remind you, that the points in de-

bate between us are already settled in themselves, and that our talking cannot alter or affect the nature of things; for they will be as they are, whatever apprehensions we may form of them: and remember likewise, that we must all, each one for himself, experience on which side the truth lies. I used a wrong word when I spoke of your recovery; my dear friend, look upon it only as a reprieve; for you carry the sentence of death about with you still; and unless you should be cut off (which God of his mercy forbid!) by a sudden stroke, you will as surely lie upon a death-bed, as you have been now raised from a bed of sickness. And remember likewise, (how can I bear to write it!) that, should you neglect my admonitions, they will notwithstanding have an effect upon you, though not such an effect as I could wish: they will render you more inexcusable. I have delivered my own soul by faithfully warning you: but if you will not examine the matter with that seriousness it calls for; if you will not look up to God, the former of your body, and the preserver of your spirit, for direction and assistance how to please him; if you will have your reading and conversation only on one side of the question; if you determine to let afflictions and dangers, mercies and deliverances, all pass without reflection and improvement; if you will spend your life as though you thought you were sent into the world only to eat, sleep, and play, and, after a course of years, be extinguished like the snuff of a candle;—why then, you must abide the consequences. But assuredly, sooner or

later God will meet you. My hearty daily prayer is, that it may be in a way of mercy, and that you may be added to the number of the trophies of his invincible grace.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCCLII.

From the SAME to the SAME. On the same subject.

DEAR SIR,

1760.

Though I truly love you, and have no reason to doubt of the reality of your friendship to me; yet I cannot but apprehend that, notwithstanding our mutual regard, and my frequent attempts to be witty (if I could) for your diversion, there is something in most of my letters (which I cannot, dare not, wholly suppress) that disgusts and wearies you, and makes you less inclined to keep up a frequent intercourse than you would otherwise be. Rather than lose you quite, I will in general spare you as much as I can; but at present you must bear with me, and allow me full scope. You have given me a challenge, which I know not how to pass over; and since you so far justify my preaching, as to condescend to preach (in your way) yourself, permit me for this time to preach again, and to take some passages in your letter for my text.

In the present debate I will accept your compliment, and suppose myself to be, as you say, a man

of sense. You allow, then, that all the sense is not on your side. This indeed you cannot deny; for whatever becomes of me, it is needless to tell you, that Hale, Boyle, and other great names I could mention, were men of as great penetration and judgment, had as good opportunities, and took as much pains to be informed of the truth, as any of the advocates for infidelity can pretend to. And you cannot, with any modesty or consistence, absolutely determine, that they had not as good grounds for thinking themselves right, as you can have for concluding they were wrong.

But declining the advantage of human authority, I am content the point shall rest between you and me. And here I beg you to observe, that I have one evident advantage over you in judging, namely, that I have experienced the good and evil on both sides, and you only on one. If you were to send me an inventory of your pleasures, how charmingly your time runs on, and how dexterously it is divided between the coffee-houses, play-house, the card-table, and tavern, with intervals of balls, concerts, &c.; I could answer, that most of these I have tried and tried again, and know the utmost they can yield, and have seen enough of the rest, most heartily to despise them all. Setting religion entirely out of the question, I profess I had rather be a worm to crawl upon the ground, than to bear the name of man upon the poor terms of whiling away my life in an insipid round of such insignificant and unmanly trifles. I will return your own expression,—I believe you to be a person of sense;

but, alas ! how do you prostitute your talents and capacity, how far do you act below yourself, if you know no higher purpose of life than these childish dissipations, together with the more serious business of rising early and sitting up late, to amass money, that you may be able to enlarge your expenses ? I am sure while I lived in these things I found them unsatisfying and empty to the last degree ; and the only advantage they afforded (miserable are they who are forced to deem it an advantage) was, that they often relieved me from the trouble and burden of thinking. If you have any other pleasures than these, they are such as must be evil and inconvenient, even upon your own plan ; and therefore my friendship will not allow me to bring them into the account. I am willing to hope you do not stoop still lower in pursuit of satisfaction. Thus far we stand upon even ground. You know all that a life of pleasure can give, and I know it likewise.

On the other hand, if I should attempt to explain to you the source and streams of my best pleasures, such as a comfortable assurance of the pardon of my sins, an habitual communion with the God who made heaven and earth, a calm reliance on the Divine Providence, the cheering prospect of a better life in a better world, with the pleasing foretastes of heaven in my own soul ; should I, or could I, tell you the pleasure I often find in reading the Scripture, in the exercise of prayer, and in that sort of preaching and conversation which you despise, I doubt not but you would think as meanly of my happiness as I do of

yours. But here lies the difference, my dear friend; you condemn that which you have never tried. You know no more of these things than a blind man does of colours; and, notwithstanding all your flourishes, I defy you to be at all times able to satisfy yourself, that things may not possibly be as I have represented them.

Besides, what do I lose, upon my plan, that should make me so worthy of your pity? Have you a quicker relish in the prudent use of temporal comforts? Do you think I do not eat my food with as much pleasure as you can do, though perhaps with less cost and variety? Is your sleep sounder than mine? Have not I as much satisfaction in social life? It is true, to join much with the gay fluttering tribe, who spend their days in laugh and sing-song, is equally contrary to my duty and inclination. But I have friends and acquaintance as well as you. Among the many who favour me with their esteem and friendship, there are some who are persons of sense, learning, wit, and (what perhaps may weigh as much with you) of fortune and distinction. And if you should say, "Ay, but they are all enthusiasts like yourself," you would say nothing to the purpose, since, upon your maxim, that "happiness is according to opinion," it cannot be an objection, but the contrary, to have my acquaintance to my own taste. Thus much for the brighter side of your situation;—or let me add one thing more. I know you have thoughts of marriage: do you think, if you should enter into this relation, your principles are calculated to make

you more happy in it than I am? You are well acquainted with our family-life. Do you propose to know more of the peace and heart-felt joy of domestic union, than I have known, and continue to know to this hour? I wish you may equal us; and if you do, we shall still be, as before, but upon even ground. I need not turn Deist to enjoy the best and the most that this life can afford.

But I need not tell you, that the present life is not made up of pleasurable incidents only. Pain, sickness, losses, disappointments, injuries, and affronts, will more or less, at one time or other, be our lot. And can you bear these trials better than I? You will not pretend to it. Let me appeal to yourself: How often do you toss and disquiet yourself, like a wild bull in a net, when things cross your expectations? As your thoughts are more engrossed by what you see, you must be more keenly sensible of what you feel. You cannot view these trials as appointed by a wise and heavenly Father, in subservience to your good; you cannot taste the sweetness of his promises, nor feel the secret supports of his strength, in an hour of affliction: you cannot so cast your burden and care upon him, as to find a sensible relief to your spirit thereby, nor can you see his hand engaged and employed in effecting your deliverance. Of these things you know no more than of the art of flying; but I seriously assure you, and I believe my testimony will go further with you than my judgment, that they are realities, and that I have found them to be so. When my worldly concerns have been most thorny and discouraging,

I have once and again felt the most of that peace which the world can neither give nor take away. However, I may state the case still lower. You do pretty well among your friends; but how do you like being alone? Would you not give something for that happy secret, which could enable you to pass a rainy day pleasantly, without the assistance of business, company, or amusement? Would it not mortify you greatly to travel for a week in an unfrequented road, where you shall meet with no lively incidents to recruit and raise your spirits? Alas! what a poor scheme of pleasure is yours, that will not support an interval of reflection!

What you have heard is true. I have a few friends who meet at my house once a fortnight, and we spend an hour or two in worshipping the God who made us. And can this move your indignation, or your compassion? Does it show a much nobler spirit, a more refined way of thinking, to live altogether without God in the world? If I kept a card-assembly at those times, it would not displease you. How can you, as a person of sense, avoid being shocked at your own unhappy prejudice? But I remember how it was once with myself, and forbear to wonder. May He who has opened my eyes, open yours. He only can do it. I do not expect to convince you by any thing I can say as of myself; but if he be pleased to make use of me as his instrument, then you will be convinced. How should I then rejoice! I should rejoice to be useful to any one; but especially to you, whom I dearly love. May God show you your true self, and your

true state; then you will attentively listen to what you now disdain to hear of—his goodness in providing redemption and pardon for the chief of sinners, through Him who died upon the cross for sins not his own. Keep this letter by you at my request; and when you write, tell me that you receive it in good part, and that you still believe me to be

Your sincere and affectionate friend,
J. NEWTON.

SECTION IV.

LETTERS OF ADVICE TO THE YOUNG, FROM PARENTS,
&c. &c.

LETTER CCCLIII.

CECIL, LORD BURLEIGH's advice to his son, ROBERT CECIL.

SON ROBERT,

The virtuous inclinations of thy matchless mother, by whose tender and godly care thy infancy was governed, together with thy education under so zealous and excellent a tutor, puts me in rather assurance than hope that thou art not ignorant of that *summum bonum*, which is only able to make thee happy as well in thy death as in thy life; I mean,

the true knowledge and worship of thy Creator and Redeemer ; without which all other things are vain and miserable. So that thy youth being guided by so sufficient a teacher, I make no doubt, that he will furnish thy life with divine and moral documents. Yet, that I may not cast off the care be-seeming a parent towards his child, or that thou shouldest have cause to derive thy whole felicity and welfare rather from others than from whence thou receivedst thy breath and being, I think it fit and agreeable to the affection I bear thee, to help thee with such rules and advertisements for the squaring of thy life as are rather gained by experience than by much reading. To the end that, entering into this exorbitant age, thou mayest be the better prepared to shun those scandalous courses whereunto the world, and the lack of experience, may easily draw thee. And because I will not confound thy memory, I have reduced them into ten precepts ; and, next unto Moses's tables, if thou imprint them in thy mind, thou shalt reap the benefit, and I the content.

And they are these following :—

1. When it shall please God to bring thee to man's estate, use great providence and circumspection in choosing thy wife ; for from thence will spring all thy future good or evil. And it is an action of thy life like unto a stratagem of war, wherein a man can err but once. If thy estate be good, match near home and at leisure ; if weak, far off and quickly. Enquire diligently of her disposition, and how her parents have been inclined

in their youth. Let her not be poor, how generous⁽¹⁾ soever ; for a man can buy nothing in the market with gentility. Nor choose a base and uncomely creature altogether for wealth ; for it will cause contempt in others and loathing in thee. Neither make choice of a dwarf or a fool, for by the one thou shalt beget a race of pigmies ; the other will be thy continual disgrace ; and it will yirke⁽²⁾ thee to hear her talk. For thou shalt find it to thy grief, that there is nothing more fulsome⁽³⁾ than a she-fool.

And touching the guiding of thy house, let thy hospitality be moderate, and according to the means of thy estate, rather plentiful than sparing, but not costly ; for I never knew any man grow poor by keeping an orderly table. But some consume themselves through secret vices, and their hospitality bears the blame. But banish swinish drunkards out of thine house, which is a vice impairing health, consuming much, and makes no show. I never heard praise ascribed to the drunkard but the well bearing his drink, which is a better commendation for a brewer's horse or drayman, than for either a gentleman or a serving-man. Beware thou spend not above three of four parts of thy revenues, nor above a third part of that in thy house ; for the other two parts will do no more than defray thy extraordinaries, which always surmount the ordinary by much : otherwise thou shalt live, like a rich beggar, in continual want. And the

(1) Well born. (2) Irk. (3) Disgusting.

needy man can never live happily nor contentedly ; for every disaster makes him ready to mortgage or sell. And that gentleman who sells an acre of land sells an ounce of credit ; for gentility is nothing else but ancient riches. So that if the foundation shall at any time sink, the building must needs follow. So much for the first precept.

2. Bring thy children up in learning and obedience, yet without outward austerity. Praise them openly, reprehend them secretly. Give them good countenance, and convenient maintenance, according to thy ability ; otherwise thy life will seem their bondage, and what portion thou shalt leave them at thy death they will thank death for it, and not thee. And I am persuaded that the foolish cockering ⁽¹⁾ of some parents, and the over-stern carriage of others, causeth more men and women to take ill courses than their own vicious inclinations. Marry thy daughters in time, lest they marry themselves. And suffer not thy sons to pass the Alps ; for they shall learn nothing there but pride, blasphemy, and atheism. ⁽²⁾ And if by travel they get a few broken languages, that shall profit them nothing more than to have one meat served in divers dishes. Neither, by my con-

(1) Over indulgence.

(2) This strong caution against travelling seems like a pre-sage of the future evils it was to produce to his own family. His grandson, William, the second Earl of Exeter, and his great grandson, Lord Roos, were both, when at Rome, made proselytes to the Popish religion.

sent, shalt thou train them up in wars ; for he that sets up his rest to live by that profession can hardly be an honest man or a good Christian. Besides, it is a science no longer in request than use. For soldiers in peace are like chimneys in summer.

3. Live not in the country without corn and cattle about thee : for he that putteth his hand to the purse for every expense of household, is like him that keepeth water in a sieve. And what provision thou shalt want, learn to buy it at the best hand : for there is one penny saved in four betwixt buying in thy need, and when the markets and seasons serve fittest for it. Be not served with kinsmen, or friends ; or men intreated to stay ; for they expect much and do little ; nor with such as are amorous, for their heads are intoxicated. And keep rather too few, than one too many. Feed them well, and pay them with the most ; and then thou mayest boldly require service at their hands.

4. Let thy kindred and allies be welcome to thy house and table. Grace them with thy countenance, and further them in all honest actions ; for, by this means, thou shalt so double the band of nature, as thou shalt find them so many advocates to plead an apology for thee behind thy back. But shake off those glow-worms, I mean parasites and sycophants, who will feed and fawn upon thee in the summer of prosperity ; but, in an adverse storm, they will shelter thee no more than an arbour in winter.

5. Beware of suretyship for thy best friends. He

that payeth another man's debt seeketh his own decay. But if thou canst not otherwise choose, rather lend thy money thyself upon good bonds, although thou borrow it. So shalt thou secure thyself and pleasure thy friend. Neither borrow money of a neighbour or a friend, but of a stranger; where, paying for it, thou shalt hear no more of it. Otherwise thou shalt eclipse thy credit, lose thy freedom, and yet pay as dear as to another. But in borrowing of money be precious of thy word; for he that hath care of keeping days of payment is lord of another man's purse.

6. Undertake no suit against a poor man without receiving ⁽¹⁾ much wrong; for, besides that thou makest him thy compeer, it is a base conquest to triumph where there is small resistance. Neither attempt law against any man before thou be fully resolved that thou hast right on thy side; and then spare not for either money or pains; for a cause or two so followed and obtained will free thee from suits a great part of thy life.

7. Be sure to keep some great man thy friend, but trouble him not for trifles. Compliment him often with many, yet small gifts, and of little charge. And if thou hast cause to bestow any great gratuity, let it be something which may be daily in sight: otherwise, in this ambitious age, thou shalt remain like a hop without a pole, live in obscurity, and be made a football for every insulting companion to spurn at.

(1) Unless you receive.

8. Towards thy superiors be humble, yet generous.⁽¹⁾ With thine equals, familiar, yet respective. Towards thine inferiors show much humanity, and some familiarity : as to bow the body, stretch forth the hand, and to uncover the head ; with such like popular compliments. The first prepares thy way to advancement,—the second makes thee known for a man well bred,—the third gains a good report ; which, once got, is easily kept. For right humanity takes deep root in the multitude, as they are more easily gained by unprofitable courtesies than by churlish benefits. Yet I advise thee not to affect, or neglect, popularity too much. Seek not to be Essex : shun to be Raleigh.⁽²⁾

9. Trust not any man with thy life, credit, or estate. For it were folly for a man to enthrall himself to his friend, as though, occasion being offered, he should not dare to become an enemy.

10. Be not scurrilous in conversation, not satirical in thy jests. The one will make thee unwelcome to all company ; the other pull on quarrels, and get the hatred of thy best friends. For suspicious jests, when any of them savour of truth, leave a bitterness in the minds of those which are touched. And, albeit I have already pointed at this inclusively, yet I think it necessary to leave it to thee as a special caution ; because I have seen

(1) Not mean.

(2) Essex was the idol of the people ; his rival, Raleigh, their aversion, till his undeserved misfortunes attracted their compassion, and his heroism their applause.

many so prone to grip and gird, (¹) as they would rather lose their friend than their jest. And if perchance their boiling brain yield a quaint scoff, they will travail to be delivered of it, as a woman with child. These nimble fancies are but the froth of wit.

LETTER CCCLIV.

SIR HENRY SIDNEY to his son, PHILIP SIDNEY, (then twelve years of age,) at school at Shrewsbury.

I have received two letters from you, one written in Latin, the other in French, which I take in good part, and will you to exercise that practice of learning often; for that will stand you in most stead, in that profession of life that you are born to live in. And, since this is my first letter that ever I did write to you, I will not, that it be all empty of some advices, which my natural care of you provoketh me to wish you to follow, as documents to you in this your tender age. Let your first action be the lifting up of your mind to Almighty God, by hearty prayer, and feelingly digest the words you speak in prayer, with continual meditation, and thinking of Him to whom you pray, and of the matter for which you pray. And use this as an ordinary, at, and at an ordinary hour. Whereby the time itself will put

(¹) Mock and jibe.

you in remembrance to do that which you are accustomed to do. In that time apply your study to such hours as your discreet master doth assign you, earnestly ; and the time (I know) he will so limit, as shall be both sufficient for your learning, and safe for your health. And mark the sense and matter of all that you read, as well as the words. So shall you both enrich your tongue with words, and your wit with matter ; and judgment will grow as years groweth in you. Be humble and obedient to your master, for unless you frame yourself to obey others, yea, and feel in yourself what obedience is, you shall never be able to teach others how to obey you. Be courteous of gesture, and affable to all men, with diversity of reverence, according to the dignity of the person. There is nothing that winneth so much with so little cost. Use moderate diet, so as, after your meat, you may find your wit fresher, and not duller, and your body more lively, and not more heavy. Seldom drink wine, and yet sometimes do, lest being enforced to drink upon the sudden, you should find yourself inflamed. Use exercise of body, but such as is without peril of your joints or bones. It will increase your force, and enlarge your breath. Delight to be cleanly, as well in all parts of your body as in your garments. It shall make you grateful in each company, and otherwise loathsome. Give yourself to be merry, for you degenerate from your father, if you find not yourself most able in will and body, to do any thing, when you be most merry : but

let your mirth be ever void of all scurrility, and biting words to any man, for a wound given by a word is oftentimes harder to be cured, than that which is given with the sword. Be you rather a hearer and bearer away of other men's talk, than a beginner or procurer of speech, otherwise you shall be counted to delight to hear yourself speak. If you hear a wise sentence, or an apt phrase, commit it to your memory, with respect of the circumstance, when you shall speak it. Let never oath be heard to come out of your mouth, nor words of ribaldry: detest it in others, so shall custom make to yourself a law against it in yourself. Be modest in each assembly, and rather be rebuked of light fellows, for maiden-like shamefacedness, than of your sad friends for pert boldness. Think upon every word before you utter it, and remember how nature hath rampired up (as it were) the tongue with teeth, lips, yea, and hair without the lips, and all betokening reins, or bridles, for the loose use of that member. Above all things tell no untruth, no, not in trifles. The custom of it is naughty, and let it not satisfy you, that, for a time, the hearers take it for a truth; for after it will be known as it is, to your shame; for there cannot be a greater reproach to a gentleman, than to be accounted a liar. Study and endeavour yourself to be virtuously occupied. So shall you make such an habit of well-doing in you, that you shall not know how to do evil, though you would. Remember, my son, the noble blood you are descended of, by your mother's side; and

think that only by virtuous life and good action, you may be an ornament to that illustrious family; and otherwise, through vice and sloth, you shall be counted, *labes generis*, one of the greatest curses that can happen to man. Well, my little Philip, this is enough for me, and too much I fear for you. But if I shall find that this light meal of digestion nourish any thing the weak stomach of your young capacity, I will, as I find the same grow stronger, feed it with tougher food. Your loving father, so long as you live in the fear of God.

LETTER CCCXLV.

SIR MATTHEW HALE to his SON.

ROBIN,

You are now about sixteen years old; you have passed the more innocent part of your life, and are come to that age wherein the vanity of youth, and the necessity of an education more distant from your father's eye, do expose you to more dangers and temptations than formerly.

You are like a small pinnace beginning to put out to sea, wherein are many rocks and quicksands, which, besides accidental storms and tempests, may endanger you in your voyage. And many times youths do contract those ill customs about your age, that either ruin them betimes, or, like *mali genii*, follow them to their graves, or at best, are not

without difficulty and loss of time broken. My business at this time is to give you some counsels in writing that may abide with you, and may be frequently considered by you, for the avoiding those rocks and dangers that are incident to your age, complexion, and future condition. And it will be your wisdom, reputation, and advantage, often to consider them ; constantly to observe them, and in them to look upon me as present, advising you, observing you, and reprehending your neglect, or commending your observance. And, indeed, you have a straiter eye upon you than mine can be ; which is upon your ways, though mine always cannot be. The advice that is given you comes from a father, and, therefore, carries in it love and authority ; and it comes from one that hath, by God's assistance, passed through your age and the dangers incident to it ; and hath had a strict observation and long experience, and, therefore, carries in it more weight and safety.

LETTER CCCLVI.

PHILIP HENRY to his youngest DAUGHTER, on a proposal of marriage made to her.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER,

Your present affair we can truly say was no less a surprise to us, than it was to you ; but we have

learned, both from our fixed belief of God's universal providence in every thing, and his particular special providence towards those that fear him, and also from our last year's experience, once and again, of his doing that for us which we looked not for ;—to cease our wonder, and to apply ourselves, as we ought to do, to our duty. We would have you do so likewise, saying, as Paul, which was the first word that grace spoke in him,—*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* Your way is, in the first place, to acknowledge God, not only in the thing itself, but in all the motions and events of it ; and, if you do so, he will direct you ; that is, guide and bless, and succeed your steps. You are, next, to admit the person into your converse as in another case, with all purity ; ⁽¹⁾ that is, at no unfitting time, in no unfitting place, manner, or other circumstance ; as it will not be desired, so will it not be granted. Your end, herein, is to be the same with his ; your next end, that you may be acquainted with each other's temper and disposition. Especially that you may feel the pulse of each other's soul, how it beats towards God, and his works and ways. As the agreement is in *that*, accordingly will be much of the sweetness and comfort of the condition.

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If height and fulness in the world were the things that would make us happy, those who have them

(1) 1 Tim. v. 2.

would be the happy people ; but it is not so. It shall be my endeavour, as far as I can, to inform myself how things are in those matters, that there may be no mistake on either side, and then to do as there shall be cause. You will remember one thing, which you have often heard from me in other's cases, though never in your own, and that is, to keep yourself free from all engagements, by promise, till the time come when it shall be thought proper, by mutual consent, that I contract you, which will be time enough for you to do that. To how many hath the not observing this rule been a snare ! We are truly thoughtful for you, you may well believe, but must not be too thoughtful. Unto God we must, and do, commit our way in it, and so must you yours, " casting all our care upon him, for he careth for us." We have, hitherto, found his contrivances best, not ours. I am glad you have so worthy a friend as Mrs. M. K——, to unbosom yourself to, and to help to advise you, and pray for you. I told your brother when I thought it would be convenient you should come home. If he has not opportunity of sending you then, we shall, soon after, God willing, send for you. Our love and blessing is to him, and our daughter, and to your dear self, having *confidence in you in all things*; ⁽¹⁾ (but it is "through the Lord" as it is limited, Galatians, v. 10;) that you will act as I have counselled you.

(1) 2 Cor. vii. 16.

Committing you to his protection and guidance,
I rest,

Your loving father,

PHILIP HENRY.

LETTER CCCLVII.

LADY RUSSELL to her son, the young DUKE OF BEDFORD.

Stratton, July, 1706.

When I take my pen to write this, I am, by the goodness and mercy of God, in a moderate and easy state of health—a blessing I have thankfully felt through the course of a long life, which (with a much greater help) the contemplation of a more durable state, has maintained and upheld me through varieties of providences and conditions of life. But all the delights and sorrows of this mixed state must end; and I feel the decays that attend old age creep so fast on me,⁽¹⁾ that, although I may yet get over some more years, however, I ought to make it my frequent meditation, that the day is near, when this earthly tabernacle shall be dissolved, and my immortal spirit be received into that place of purity, where no unclean thing can enter; there to sing eternal praises to the great Creator of all things. With the Psalmist I believe, “at His right hand there are pleasures for evermore:” and what is good and of eternal duration, must be joyful above what we can

(1) Lady Russell was now past seventy years of age.

conceive ; and what is evil and of like duration, must be despairingly miserable. And now, my dear child, I pray, I beseech you, I conjure you, my loved son, consider what there is of felicity in this world, that can compensate the hazard of losing an everlasting easy being ; and then deliberately weigh, whether or no the delights and gratifications of a vicious or idle course of life are such, that a wise or thoughtful man would choose or submit to. Again, fancy its enjoyments at the height imagination can propose or suggest ; (which yet rarely or never happens, or if it does, as a vapour soon vanishes ;) but let us grant it could, and last to fourscore years, is this more than the quickest thought to eternity ? Oh, my child ! fix on that word, eternity ! Old Hobbes, with all his fancied strength of reason, could never endure to rest or stay upon that thought, but ran from it to some miserable amusement.

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Look up to the firmament and down to the deep, how can any doubt a divine power ? And if there is, what can be impossible to infinite power ? Then, why an infidel in the world ? And if not such, who then would hazard a future state, for the pleasure of sin a few days ? No wise man, and indeed, no man that lives and would deserve to see good days ; for the laws of God are grateful. In his gospel the terrors of majesty are laid aside, and he speaks in the still and soft voice of his Son incarnate, the fountain and spring whence flows gladness. A gloomy and dejected countenance

better becomes a galley-slave than a Christian, where joy, love, and hope should dwell. The idolatrous heathen performed their worship with trouble and terror, but a Christian and a good liver, with a merry heart and lightsome spirit : for, examine and consider well, where is the hardship of a virtuous life ? (when we have moderated our irregular habits and passions, and subdued them to the obedience of reason and religion.) We are free to all the innocent gratifications and delights of life ; and we may lawfully, nay, further, I say we ought to rejoice in *this beautiful world*, and all the conveniences and provisions, even for pleasure, we find in it ; and which, in *much goodness*, is afforded us to sweeten and allay the labours and troubles incident to this mortal state, nay, inseparable, I believe, by disappointments, cross accidents, bad health, unkind return for good deeds, mistakes even among friends, and what is most touching, death of friends. But in the worst of these calamities, the thought of a happy eternity does not alone support, but also revive the spirit of a man ; and he goeth forward to his labour with inward comfort, till the evening of his day, (that is, his life on earth,) and with the Psalmist, cries out, “ I will consider the heavens, even the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained. What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, that thou shouldest so regard him ? ” (1) “ Thou madest him lower than

¹ Psalm viii.

the angels, to crown him with glory." Here is matter of praise and gladness. "The fool," as the Psalmist expresses it, "hath said in his heart, There is no God;" or, let us consider the man, who is content to own an invisible power, yet tries to believe, that when man has done living on this earth he lives no more; but I would ask, if any of these unhappy creatures are fully persuaded, or that there does not remain in those men, at times, (as in sickness or sober thoughtfulness,) some suspicion or doubt that it may be other than they try to think. And although they may, to shun such a thought, or be rid of such a contemplation, run away from it to some unprofitable diversion, or, perhaps, suffer themselves to be rallied out of such a thought, so destructive to the way they walk in; yet to be sure, that man does not feel the peace and tranquillity *he* does, who believes a future state, and is a good man. For although this good man, when his mind may be clouded with some calamity, very grievous to him, or the disorder of vapours, to a melancholy temper, I say, if he is tempted to some suspicion, that it is possible it may be other than he believes, (pray observe,) such a surmise or thought, nay, the belief, cannot drive him to any horror: he fears no evil, because he is a good man, and with his life all sorrow ends too; therefore, it is not to be denied, he is the wisest man who lives by the Scripture rule, and endeavours to keep God's law. First, his mind is in peace and tranquillity; he walks sure who keeps innocence, and takes heed to the thing that

is right. Secondly, he is secure: God is his friend; that Infinite Being; and He has said, "Come unto me, ye that are heavy laden; my yoke is easy;" but guilt is, certainly, a heavy load; it sinks and damps the spirits. "A wounded spirit who can bear?" And the evil, subtle spirit waits (I am persuaded) to drive the sinner to despair, but godliness makes a cheerful heart.

Now, O man, let not past errors discourage: who lives and sins not? God will judge the obstinate, profane, unrelenting sinner; but, full of compassion to the work of his own hand, if they will cease from doing evil and learn to do well, pray for grace to repent, and endeavour with that measure which will be given, if sincerely asked for; for at what time soever a sinner repents, (but observe, this is no license to sin, because at any time we may repent,) for that day we may not live to see; and so, like the fool in the parable, our lamps be untrimmed when we are called upon. Remember, that to forsake vice is the beginning of virtue: and virtue certainly is most conducive to content of mind and a cheerful spirit. He (the virtuous man) rejoiceth with a friend in the good things he enjoys; fears not the reproaches of any; no evil spirit can approach to hurt him here, or accuse him in the great day of the Lord, when every soul shall be judged according as they have done good or evil. Oh, blessed state! fit for life, fit for death! In this good state I wish and pray for all mankind; but most particularly, and with all the ardour I am capable of, to those I have brought

into the world, and those dear to them. Thus are my fervent and frequent prayers directed,—that you may die the death of the righteous, and to this end, that Almighty God would endue you with all spiritual wisdom, to discern what is pleasing in his sight.

LETTER CCCLVIII.

LADY ANNE FANSHAWE to her SON.

I have thought it good to discourse to you, my most dear and only son, the most remarkable actions and accidents of your family, as well as those more eminent ones of your father; and my life and necessity, not delight or revenge, hath made me insert some passages which will reflect on their owners, as the praise of others will be but just, which is my intent in this narrative. I would not have you be a stranger to it; because, by the example, you may imitate what is applicable to your condition in the world, and endeavour to avoid those misfortunes we have passed through, if God please.

Endeavour to be innocent as a dove, but as wise as a serpent; and let this lesson direct you most in the greatest extremes of fortune. Hate idleness, and curb all passions; be true in all words and actions; unnecessarily deliver not your opinion; but when you do, let it be just, well-considered, and plain. Be charitable in all thought, word,

and deed, and ever ready to forgive injuries done to yourself, and be more pleased to do good than to receive good.

Be civil and obliging to all, dutiful when God and nature command you ; but friend to one, and that friendship keep sacred, as the greatest tie upon earth ; and be sure to ground it upon virtue ; for no other is either happy or lasting.

Endeavour always to be content in that estate of life which it hath pleased God to call you to ; and think it a great fault not to employ your time, either for the good of your soul, or improvement of your understanding, health, or estate ; and as these are the most pleasant pastimes, so it will make you a cheerful old age, which is as necessary for you to design, as to make provision to support the infirmities which decay of strength brings : and it was never seen that a vicious youth terminated in a contented, cheerful old age, but perished out of countenance. Ever keep the best qualified persons' company, out of whom you will find advantage ; and reserve some hours daily to examine yourself and fortune ; for if you embark yourself in perpetual conversation or recreation, you will certainly shipwreck your mind and fortune. Remember the proverb—" Such as his company is, such is the man," and have glorious actions before your eyes, and think what shall be your portion in heaven, as well as what you desire on earth.

Manage your fortune prudently, and forget not that you must give God an account hereafter, and upon all occasions.

Remember your father whose true image, though I can never draw to the life, unless God will grant me that blessing in you; yet because you were but ten months and ten days old when God took him out of this world, I will for your advantage, show you him with all truth, and without partiality.

He was of the highest size of men, strong, and of the best proportion; his complexion sanguine, and his skin exceedingly fair; his hair dark brown, and very curling, but not very long; his eyes grey and penetrating, his nose high, his countenance gracious and wise, his motion good, his speech clear and distinct. He never used exercise but walking, that generally with some book in his hand, which oftentimes was poetry, in which he spent his idle hours; sometimes he would ride out to take the air, but his most delight was to go only with me in a coach some miles, and there discourse of those things which then most pleased him, of what nature soever.

He was very obliging to all, and forward to serve his master, his country, and friend; cheerful in his conversation; his discourse ever pleasant, mixed with the sayings of wise men, and their histories repeated as occasion offered, yet so reserved that he never showed the thought of his heart, in its greatest sense, but to myself only; and this I thank God with all my soul for, that he never discovered his trouble to me but he went from me with perfect cheerfulness and content; nor revealed he his joys and hopes but he would say, that

they were doubled by putting them in my breast. I never heard him hold a disputation in my life; but often he would speak against it, saying, it was an uncharitable custom, which never turned to the advantage of either party. He would never be drawn to the fashion of any party, saying, he found it sufficient honestly to perform that employment he was in: he loved and used cheerfulness in all his actions, and professed his religion in all his life and conversation. He was a true Protestant of the Church of England, so born, so brought up, and so died; his conversation was so honest, that I never heard him speak a word in my life that tended to God's dishonour, or encouragement of any kind of debauchery or sin. He was even much esteemed by his two masters, Charles the First and Charles the Second, both for great parts and honesty, as for his conversation, in which they took great delight; he being so free from passion, that made him beloved of all that knew him; nor did I ever see him moved but with his master's concerns, in which he would hotly pursue his interest through the greatest difficulties.

He was the tenderest father imaginable, the carefulest and most generous master I ever knew; he loved hospitality, and would often say, it was wholly essential for the constitution of England: he loved and kept order with the greatest decency possible; and though he would say I managed his domestics wholly, yet I ever governed them and

myself by his commands; in the managing of which, I thank God, I found his approbation and content.

Now you will expect that I should say something that may remain of us jointly, which I will do, though it makes my eyes gush out with tears, and cuts me to the soul to remember, and in part express the joys I was blessed with in him. Glory be to God, we never had but one mind throughout our lives. Our souls were wrapped up in each other's; our aims and designs one, our loves one, and our resentments one. We so studied one the other, that we knew each other's minds by our looks. Whatever was real happiness, God gave it me in him; but to commend my better half, which I want sufficient expression for, methinks is to commend myself, and so may bear a censure; but, might it be permitted, I could dwell eternally on his praise most justly; but thus without offence I do, and so you may imitate him in his patience, his prudence, his chastity, his charity, his generosity, his perfect resignation to God's will; and praise God for him as long as you live here, and with him hereafter in the kingdom of heaven. Amen.

LETTER CCCLIX.

MR. ISAAC WATTS (father of Dr. Watts) to his CHILDREN.

Written when in prison.

MY DEAR CHILDREN. London, the 21st May, 1685.

Though it hath pleased the only wise God to suffer the malice of ungodly men, the enemies of Jesus Christ (and my enemies for his sake) to break out so far against me, as to remove me from you in my personal habitation, thereby at once bereaving me of that comfort which I might have hoped for in the enjoyment of my family in peace, and you of that education which my love as a father, and duty as a parent required me to give; yet such are the longings of my soul for your good and prosperity, especially in spiritual concerns, that I remember you always with myself in my daily addresses to the throne of grace. Though I cannot speak to you, yet I pray for you; and do hope that my God will hear me, and in due time bring me to live again amongst you, if he shall see such a mercy fit to be bestowed on me or you. However, we must endeavour by patient waiting to submit to his will without murmuring; and not to think amiss of His chastising us, knowing that all his works are the products of infinite wisdom; his designs are the advancement of his own glory; and his ends towards his people their sanctification and salvation, which certainly shall be accomplished at last, however his great provi-

dences may seem contrary to it, as to our apprehensions.

My dear children, since in this my absence from you, it is the desire of one of you, that is, my eldest son (¹) to have a line of counsel from his father, I hope he has but mentioned it as the mouth for himself, and the rest of you that are in any wise capable of understanding, and that it will be acceptable to you all, and regarded by you: and therefore, I shall write in general terms to you all that can understand it at present; and to the rest as they grow up to understand it, if you will keep it, or copy it for them; for though I am not altogether without hopes of seeing you again, yet I am nowise certain of it, (²) all our time being in God's hands; but I would have you know, that you have yet a father that loves you. I am glad to hear such a desire from any of you; and willing heartily to comply with it, so far as my time, and the many disadvantageous circumstances that attend me, will permit.

I charge you frequently to read the Holy Scriptures; and that not as a task or burden laid on you, but get your hearts to delight in them: there are the only pleasant histories which are certainly true, and greatly profitable; there are abundance of precious promises made to sinners, such as you are by nature; there are sweet invitations and counsels of God and Christ, to come in and lay

(¹) Afterwards Dr. Watts.

(²) Anticipating a lengthened exile from home, which was the fate of many of the nonconformists.

hold of them ; there are the choice heavenly sayings and sermons of the Son of God, the blessed prophets and apostles. Above all books and writings account the Bible the best ; read it most, and lay up the truths of it in your hearts ; therein is revealed the whole will of God, for the rule of man's faith and obedience, which he must believe and do to be holy here and happy hereafter. Let all the learning and knowledge you attain by other books, both at school and at home, be improved as servants to help you the better to understand God's word, in all the several tongues wherein you read it. I am the larger upon this head, because therein you may come to know your duty to God and man ; and indeed the sum of all the counsel I can give you, necessary for the regulating of your behaviour towards God and man, in every station, place, and condition of your lives, is contained in that blessed word of God, which pronounceth a blessing to those that read and hear it, and keep the things that are therein written. (1)

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I charge you to be dutiful and obedient to all your superiors, to your grandfather and both grandmothers, and all other relations and friends that are over you, but in an especial manner to your mother, to whose care and government God hath wholly committed you in my absence ; who, as I am sure, dearly loves you, so she will command and direct you to her utmost ability in all

(1) Rev. i. 3.

ways, for your good of soul and body. Consider, she is left alone to bear all the burden of bringing up; and is, as it were, a widow; her time is filled up with many cares, and therefore do not grieve me by any rebellious or disobedient ways; but be willing to learn of her and to be ruled by her, that she may have some comfort in seeing your obedient carriage; and it will rejoice me to hear it. Avoid bad company of wicked children; abhor swearing, lying, and playing on the Sabbath-day, and all other wicked courses; so shall you grow in favour with God and man. And love one another. You that are eldest, help to teach the younger; and you that are younger, do not scorn the teachings of the elder. These things I charge and command you with the authority and love of a father. Now commending you to God, and what I have written to his blessing upon your hearts, through Jesus Christ, with my dear love to your mother, my duty to your grandfather and your grandmothers, and love to all other friends, being indifferent in health, I rest your very loving father,

ISAAC WATTS.

LETTER CCCLX.

REV. THOMAS HALYBURTON to his NEPHEW, on his death-bed.

DEAR NEPHEW,

The words of your dying uncle, the last letter from him, should have some weight; and my earnest

desire, that it may have weight in order to your eternal salvation, is the reason of employing some of my last minutes, by a borrowed hand, to commend unto you to make earnest of religion, and not to rest content with a dead, dry, barren profession. I can tell you, since I came to this bed of languishing, I have found a full proof, that religion is a real, useful, noble, and profitable thing. I have been helped, through the mercy of God, during my lying here, to rejoice in the goodness of God, and lie composedly and pleasantly: nothing but religion, nothing, nothing but the power of the grace of God, can have that efficacy, to enable me to do so; and having found it so serviceable a friend, I could not but commend it to you. It is a day of power only that will engage you effectually, and will prevail with you to engage in earnest. A providence like this may rouse some present affections, which will go off in an empty flash again; but it must be a renewing work of grace that will fix an abiding anchor. The Lord in mercy engage your heart to him, that you may find how good he is to the soul that seeks him, as I do this day to my joy, and hope to do more fully in a little. I could not but commend the Lord to you, having found so much of his goodness: I never found so much when I was in health and prosperity, as I find now in sickness and languishing. I find he makes all things to be for good to his people; sickness or health, or diseases, or whatever they be, all is good, and I find all for good. I am longing to be away, and I must

break off. If God be pleased to bless this advice from a dying friend, we will meet, and meet comfortably in the higher house ; I mean, if you comply with the design of the advice. I fear the influence of the place you live in, want of lively ordinances, and the converse of lively Christians, may endanger you. Converse much with the word of God ; be much in secret prayer. God can give a good appetite and a strong stomach, that out of a very sapless piece of nourishment can fetch something that will give strength, and make coarser food subsist and nourish too. However, as soon as you can, seek after lively ordinances : endeavour by all means to cultivate acquaintance with the saints, the “ excellent ones in the earth,” who fear God.

Dear nephew, I remember kindly your wife, and I advise you, in that place where you can scarcely have access to any ordinances, and cannot but be exposed to many disadvantages and dangers in point of religion—I advise you to take the first opportunity of coming out of Babylon, and settling your business where ye may be under a lively means of grace. I know you are a child of many prayers, and you were prayed back from the gates of death, and now I wish that you may give evidence that you have been prayed back indeed for mercy to yourself. I shall be glad that this advice from a dying man come to be any way useful to you. The Lord be with your spirit. You cannot expect from any one of my condition, a digested, polished letter ; but I speak the words

of soberness and full composure of mind, blessed be God. Let your kindness to the dead appear in your kindness to my dear widow, whom I leave behind, and my six children : show your concern for both.

THO. HALYBURTON.

LETTER CCCLXI.

JONATHAN EDWARDS to his daughter, MISS MARY EDWARDS. ⁽¹⁾

Northampton, N. A. July, 26, 1749.

MY DEAR CHILD,

You may well think it is natural for a parent to be concerned for a child at so great a distance, so far out of view, and so far out of the reach of communication ; where, if you should be taken with any dangerous sickness, that should issue in death, you might probably be in your grave before we could hear of your danger. But yet, my greatest concern is not for your health, or temporal welfare, but for the good of your soul. Though you are at so great a distance from us, yet God is everywhere. You are much out of the reach of our care, but you are every moment in His hands. We have not the comfort of seeing you, but He sees you. His eye is always upon you. And if you may but live sensibly near to God, and have

⁽¹⁾ Afterwards Mrs. Dwight, of Northampton.

his gracious presence, it is no matter if you are far distant from us. I had rather you should remain hundreds of miles distant from us, and have God near to you by his Spirit, than to have you always with us, and live at a distance from God. And if the next news we should hear of you, should be of your death, though that would be very melancholy; yet, if at the same time we should receive such intelligence concerning you, as should give us the best grounds to hope, that you had died in the Lord, how much more comfortable would this be, though we should have no opportunity to see you, or to take our leave of you in your sickness, than if we should be with you during all its progress, and have much opportunity to attend upon you, and converse and pray with you, and take an affectionate leave of you, and after all have reason to apprehend, that you died without the grace and favour of God. It is comfortable to have the presence of earthly friends, especially in sickness, and on a death-bed; but the great thing is to have God our friend, and to be united to Christ, who can never die any more, and from whom our own death cannot separate us.

My desire and daily prayer is, that you may, if it may consist with the will of God, meet with God where you are, and have much of his divine influence on your heart, wherever you may be; and that, in God's due time, you may be returned to us again, in all respects under the smiles of Heaven, and especially, in prosperous circumstances in your soul, and that you may find us all

alive and well. But that is uncertain; for you know what a dying time it has been with us in this town, about this season of the year, in years past. There is not much sickness prevailing among us as yet, but we fear whether mortal sickness is not now commencing. Yesterday, the only remaining son of Mr. C—— died of a fever, and is to be buried to-day. May God fit us all for his will !

I hope that you will maintain a strict and constant watch over yourself, against all temptations, that you do not forsake and forget God, and particularly, that you do not grow slack in secret religion. Retire often from this vain world, from all its bubbles and empty shadows, and vain amusements, and converse with God alone; and seek effectually for that divine grace and comfort, the least drop of which is worth more than all the riches, gaiety, pleasures, and entertainments of the whole world.

Your very affectionate father,

JONATHAN EDWARDS.

Your mother and all the family give their love to you.

LETTER CCCLXII.

REV. JOHN NEWTON to a young FRIEND about to leave his country.

DEAR SIR,

August 24, 1774.

The lowness of your voice, and a blamable absence of mind on my part, prevented me from understanding what you said when you took your leave of me; nor did I just at that instant recollect that you were so soon going away. I could not otherwise have parted with you, without a particular expression of my warmest wishes for your welfare, and commending you with an emotion, which my heart always feels for you, to our God, and the word of his grace. Permit me therefore by writing to assure you, so far as I can answer for myself, that the request you were pleased to make for my remembrance will not be forgotten by me.

You are going abroad; you will carry with you, I doubt not, the best advice, strengthened by the authority and affection of parents, whom you greatly love and greatly reverence. This may seem to make any thing a stranger can offer unnecessary, if not impertinent; yet, confiding in your candour, and in your good opinion of my intention, I shall venture to let my pen run on a little longer. Not only my wishes, but my hopes are strong in your behalf. Perhaps there is hardly a young man in the kingdom, born to a fortune, who is setting out in life upon equal advantages with yourself. How

many at your years, who have been brought up in affluence, are unprincipled, uninstructed, and have already entered upon a course of dissipation and folly, in which it is impossible they themselves can find satisfaction, and which, (unless they are reclaimed from it by an Almighty arm,) will infallibly preclude them from usefulness or esteem ! whereas your early years have been successfully employed in the pursuit of knowledge, and your education formed under the most animating and endearing influence ; and the Lord has furnished you with every natural ability of body and mind, which may qualify you to serve him in that situation of life which his providence has allotted you. †

What may I not then further hope from these beginnings, especially as it is easy to observe, that he has given you an amiable and promising disposition of spirit, and has not only preserved you from being hurried down the stream of a giddy world, but enabled you to account the tender restraint under which you have been educated, not a yoke, but a privilege.

I sympathise with you at what you will feel when you are first separated from your happy family. But the Lord God, who is the sun and shield of those who fear him, will be always near you ! His favour is the one thing needful, which no outward advantages can compensate the want of ; and the right knowledge of him is the one thing needful, which no human teaching can communicate.

Were I more intimate with you, I could have asked the question, and perhaps received the satis-

faction to know, that you have already begun to consider him in this light; that you feel a vanity in science, an emptiness in creatures, and find that you have desires, which only He who gave them can satisfy. I trust it either is, or will be thus. As to learning, though it is useful when we know how to make a right use of it, yet considered as in our own power, and to those who trust to it, without seeking a superior guidance, it is usually the source of perplexity, strife, scepticism, and infidelity. It is indeed like a sword in a madman's hands, which gives him the more opportunity of hurting himself and others. As to what the world calls pleasure, there is so little in it, that even the philosophers of old, or many of them, though they had little of value to substitute in its room, could despise it. You will perhaps meet with some, who will talk another language, who will pretend to be too wise to submit to the Bible, and too happy in worldly things, to expect or desire any happiness beside; but I trust you have seen enough to enable you to treat such persons with the pity, and such pretensions with the contempt they deserve.

Should we set our concerns with an eternal world aside for a moment, it would be easy to demonstrate that religion is necessary, in order to make the most of this life, and to enjoy temporal good with the highest relish. In such a world as this, where we are every moment liable to so many unforeseen and unavoidable contingencies, a man without religion may be compared to a ship in a storm, without either rudder, anchor, or pilot. But then, the reli-

gion which only deserves the name, must come from above ; it must be suited to the state and wants of a sinner, it must be capable of comforting the heart, it must take away the sting and dread of death, and fix our confidence upon one who is always able to help us. Such is the religion of Jesus, such are its effects, and such are the criteria whereby we are to judge of the various forms and schemes under which it is proposed to us. But I forbear ; I am only reminding you of what you know, and what you have known to be verified by living and dying examples. This happiness, my dear sir, is open to you, to all who seek. He is enthroned in heaven, but prayer will bring him down to the heart. Indeed he is always beforehand with us ; and if we feel one desire towards him, we may accept it as a token that he gave it us to encourage us to ask for more.

May He be your guide and guard, be with you at all times, and in all places, and bring you back to your father's house in peace. Should I live to see that day, you have few friends whose congratulations would be warmer or more sincere than mine ; and if when you are settled and at leisure, you will afford me a letter, it will be both a pleasure and a favour to, dear sir,

Yours, &c.

LETTER CCCLXIII.

REV. JAMES HERVEY to a younger BROTHER, on his being about to be apprenticed.

DEAR BROTHER,

Dummer, June 27, 1737.

I find you are at London, looking out for a trade, and a master to set yourself to. I hope you pray earnestly to God to guide you in your choice by his infinite wisdom. He only knows what kind of employ will be best for you ; in what family or neighbourhood you will have the most helps and encouragements to holiness ; where you will be most exposed to temptations, to evil company, and to an early corruption. Therefore, remember what you have learned in the third chapter of Proverbs ; and now, above all other times, put in practice, “ In all thy ways acknowledge *him*, and *he* shall direct thy paths.” Beseech the all-wise God to go before you in this weighty undertaking, and to lead you to such a matter, and to settle you in such a place, where you may, the most advantageously, work out your salvation. Desire also your honoured mother, and mine, to have a great regard to your soul, and the things that make for its welfare, in putting you out. Let it be inquired, not only whether such a tradesman be a man of substance and credit, but whether he be also a man of religion and godliness ? Whether he be a lover of good people ? a careful frequenter of the church ? Whether his children be well nurtured and educated

in the fear of the Lord. Whether family prayer be daily offered up in his house. Whether he believes that the souls of his servants are committed to his trust, and that he will be answerable for the neglect of them at the judgment-seat? It will be sadly hazardous to venture yourself under the roof of any person who is not furnished with these principles, or is a stranger to these practices. But, if he be quite contrary to all these, a despiser of God and goodness, wholly devoted to carnal pleasure, and worldly gain; if he not only omit the religious care and oversight of his household, but also set them a wicked and corrupt example—let nothing induce you to enter his service. A lewd, drinking, swearing, cheating master, will be sure to disregard the sobriety and purity of your behaviour, and very likely to corrupt it. To have his disorderly carriage daily before your eyes, will be as dangerous as to lodge in a plague-house. Therefore, let no consideration of profit or advantage, or of any other sort, prevail with you to become apprentice to such a one. If you do, depend on it, you breathe tainted air; and it is much, but you catch the deadly infection. After you are bound to a master, you must be as diligent in doing your duty to him, as you should be of examining into his character before you are bound. As I have given you my advice concerning the latter of these particulars, I fancy you will not take it amiss if I give you some directions concerning the former. As soon as you are bound, you are at your master's, and not at your own disposal: he has then a right

to your hands, your strength, and all that you can do. He becomes a sort of parent to you ; and, though not a natural, yet a civil father. You are also obliged, not only by the laws of your country, and the tenor of your indentures, but by the fifth commandment of God, to pay him all due submission and honour. To do this is a most material part of your duty, as a Christian, as well as your undeniable debt, as an apprentice. It is required of you by God, in holy Scripture, and you must not ever imagine that you do what is pleasing to him, unless you conscientiously perform it. Now, that you may know what it is that your master will expect from you, with regard to him, remember, it consists, first, in reverence of his person ; secondly, in obedience to all his commands ; and, thirdly, in faithfulness to his business.

In reverence of his person, you must esteem him very highly for his superiority's sake, and the resemblance he bears to God. For God, who made you, and has an uncontrollable power over you, has communicated some of that power to your master, so that you are to look upon him as the representative, in some sort, of the divine Majesty, and invested with some of his authority. Accordingly, St. Paul says, ⁽¹⁾ you must count him worthy of all honour ; all, that is, internal and external, that of the actions and words, as well as that of the heart. It is not enough to maintain a worthy estimation inwardly ; but you must let it appear on all occa-

(¹) 1 Tim. i.

sions outwardly, by behaving yourself very obligingly to him before his face, and by speaking very respectfully of him behind his back. Suppose you should discern failings and infirmities in him, you must by no means divulge them, or make yourself merry with them, much less must you dare to set light by any of his orders. Whatever you have reason to think will grieve or displease him, will be prejudicial or offensive to him, that you must cautiously forbear.

Obedience to his commands. See how full the apostle speaks to this purpose, "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh." ⁽¹⁾ Observe likewise, from this passage, not only the necessity, but also the compass and latitude of your obedience; how large and extensive it is. It reaches, not barely to a few, but to all and every instance. If you should receive orders that are ever so much against the grain of your own inclination, you must force yourself to comply with them; receive them as you used to do nauseous physic, though they be unpleasant at first, they will do you good, and be comfortable to you afterwards; your own pleasure must always stoop, and give way to your master's. If he sets you such a task as is mean and ignoble, and such as (according to the expression of the world) is beneath a gentleman's son, do not scruple it, dear brother, but dispatch it cheerfully. Remember who hath said, "Servants, obey your masters in all

⁽¹⁾ Col. iii. 22.

things." And, oh! remember, that be we as well born and bred as we will, yet He that was higher than the highest of us all, even the most excellent and illustrious person that ever lived, condescended to the lowest and (such as our fine folks would account the) shamefulest offices. The Lord Jesus Christ, though the brightness of his Father's glory, disdained not to wash his disciples' feet. Neither be dejected because you are treated in an unworthy manner, or set to do some mean and low office for him, or his family, but rejoice rather in this, that you are made like unto your Redeemer; and in the happy prospect you will have of becoming great in heaven, by being so little on earth. I am aware this piece of advice is not so unexceptionable as the rest, it may possibly be adjudged the mark of too yielding and sneaking a spirit; but never forget that the things which are most highly esteemed by God, are held in least repute by men. I know, and am sure, that if any apprentice would make such a compliance for the sake of preserving peace, and out of conscience to the command of God, and with an eye to the example of Christ, there is a day coming when he will not repent of it; when it will not be deemed a blot in his character, but be an ornament of grace to his head, and more comely than chains about his neck. (1) Well, you see your obedience must be universal; you must come when he calls you, and go where he bids you, do all that he commands you, and let

(1) Prov. i. 9.

alone all that he forbids you. This must, moreover, be done, not grudgingly or of necessity, but readily and gladly: for hear what the Scripture saith, "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily;"⁽¹⁾ and again, "With good-will doing service."⁽²⁾ So that we must not creep, but be quick. You must not go about it with grumbling words and muttering in your mouth, but with so satisfied an air, as may show that you are pleased with whatever pleases your master.

In faithfulness in his business. This is the last branch of your duty to your master; and, since Moses has obtained an honourable testimony on this account, be you also faithful in all his house.⁽³⁾ You may find this, as indeed all the qualifications of a good servant, described by St. Paul, "Not purloining," says he, "but showing all fidelity."⁽⁴⁾ You are charged not to purloin; that is, not to keep back from your master, nor to put into your own pocket; nor convert to your own use, any of that money, which in the way of trade, passes through your hands. You were taught from your childhood to keep your hands from picking and stealing; and, I hope you abhor such abominable practices from the bottom of your heart. You must not sell at a cheaper, and buy at a dearer rate, in order to have some valuable consideration made you privily in your own person. These differ from robbing on the highway, (they are flagrant acts of dishonesty, and will cry to heaven

(1) Col. iii. 23.

(2) Eph. iii. 6.

(3) Heb. iii. 5.

(4) Tit. ii. 10.

for vengeance,) only in being less open and notorious. Such tricks and villainous devices do the same thing by craft and treachery, as house-breakers do by force and violence. Therefore, dear brother, renounce, detest, and fly from them as much as from fire, arrows, and death. Besides, you are not only to abstain from such clandestine knavery, but also to show all good fidelity. What is meant by this, you may understand, by reading how Joseph conducted himself in Potiphar's service. Your master, it is likely, will commit the management of some of his affairs to you; and you must endeavour, by a discreet behaviour, and a pious life, to bring the blessing of the Lord upon all that you take in hand. You must lay out your time and your labour, and give all diligence to answer the trust reposed in you. You must not delay the business which is urgent; nor do your work by halves, nor transfer that to others which is expected you should do yourself. "The slothful man," says Solomon, "is brother to him that is a great waster;" therefore you must avoid idleness and carelessness. In a word, you must do nothing knowingly and wilfully, that is likely to impoverish your master; but seek, by all lawful and laudable means, to increase his substance. All this you must observe, not only when he stands by you, and inspects you, but when his back is turned, and you are removed from his view; otherwise your service is nothing but eye-service, such as will prove odious to man, and is already condemned by God. For, if you appear to be indus-

trious and in earnest before your master, but to loiter and trifle when out of his sight, you will be chargeable with hypocrisy, a sin extremely hateful to Christ, and grievously pernicious to the soul. But I am afraid I tire you; this one sentence, therefore, and I have done. You must carry yourself throughout the whole course of your apprenticeship so respectfully, so obediently, so faithfully, that at the end of it, you may truly say with Jacob, "With all my power I have served your father." I had more to write, but will send you (if you care to accept it) the remainder some other time. May God bless you all, and your affectionate brother,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER CCCLXIV.

REV. JOHN NEWTON to his adopted CHILD.

MY DEAR CHILD,

Oct. 15, 1782.

It is rather to your disadvantage that I have lately corrected a mistake I had made. I thought you were but twelve years old last birth-day; but I read in a blank leaf of the great Bible, that my child was born June 22, 1769; consequently you are now in your fourteenth year. Therefore, to keep pace with my ideas and wishes, you ought to be a whole year more advanced in improvements of every kind than you are, a whole year wiser. Some

things which I might think very tolerable in my child, supposing she was but twelve years old, will seem but rather *so so*, when I know she is thirteen; and some things of another sort will be quite unsuitable at the age of thirteen, which might be more excusable if you were but twelve. You see, my dear child, you must stir your stumps, and use double diligence to fetch up this year, which we have somehow lost out of the account. You have a year less for improvement, and are a year nearer to the time in which you will begin to appear like a young woman than I expected. I know not but I should have been pleased to find that I had made a mistake on the other side, and that you were a year younger than I had supposed you. As it is, I shall hope the best; I do not complain of you. As I love you dearly, so I have much comfort in you: and I trust you will pray to the Lord for yourself, as I do for you, that he may give you his grace and wisdom and blessing; then I know you will do well. But sometimes, when I consider what a world you are growing up into, and what snares and dangers young people are exposed to, with little experience to help them, I have some painful feelings for you. The other day I was at Deptford, and saw a ship launched: she slipped easily into the water; the people on board shouted; the ship looked clean and gay, she was fresh painted, and her colours flying. But I looked at her with a sort of pity: "Poor ship!" I thought, "you are now in port and in safety; but ere long you must go to sea. Who can tell what storms

you may meet with hereafter, and to what hazards you may be exposed ; how weather-beaten you may be before you return to port again, or whether you may return at all !” Then my thoughts turned from the ship to my child. It seemed an emblem of your present state : you are now, as it were, in a safe harbour ; but by and by you must launch out into the world, which may well be compared to a tempestuous sea. I could even now almost weep at the resemblance ; but I take courage ; my hopes are greater than my fears. I know there is an infallible Pilot, who has the winds and the waves at his command. There is hardly a day passes in which I do not entreat him to take charge of you. Under his care I know you will be safe ; he can guide you unhurt amidst the storms, and rocks, and dangers, by which you might otherwise suffer, and bring you at last to the haven of eternal rest. I hope you will seek him while you are young, and I am sure he will be the friend of them that seek him sincerely ; then you will be happy, and I shall rejoice. Nothing will satisfy me but this ; though I should live to see you settled to the greatest advantage in temporal matters, except you love him, and live in his fear and favour, you would appear to me quite miserable. I think it would go near to break my heart ; for, next to your dear mamma, there is nothing so dear to me in this world as you. But the Lord gave you to me, and I have given you to him again, many and many a time upon my knees, and therefore I hope you must, and will, and shall be his.

LETTER CCCLXV.

REV. RICHARD CECIL to his SON.

MY DEAR ISRAEL,

Feb. 1802.

Your mamma received your letter at the time I was at * * *. She is greatly satisfied that you so tenderly remember what I said to you. The truth is, my dear, that your mind is greatly improved, and we cannot but notice it and rejoice in it; and you may depend upon it we shall not fail to encourage a right disposition, to the utmost of our power. Your attention to me, particularly, has been marked by every one in the family, as well as myself.

There is a point you should never lose sight of—that when a youth takes ill courses, he begins to be shy of his parents, that is, of his only true and fast friends: he secretly forms connexions with broken, if not dangerous reeds; and often plunges thereby into difficulties and disappointments, that his real friends cannot help him out of. I am rejoiced to see you take the contrary course.

I marked that wise and dutiful confidence with which you treated me; and that jealousy you had, as to how you stood in my mind. Watch against any thing which may damp and impede this early friendship with your truest friend, and you will prosper. Our family and friends are well, except * * *, who is daily getting worse; but then what is that to her? She has fought the good fight; and

is only waiting a little longer for her crown of glory. See what a blessed thing it is to be ready to meet what we all *must* meet. A king is a beggar, compared to a Christian.

Present my kindest regards to Mr. * * *. Be careful to keep up your character with that excellent man and friend. Be also assured that I remain,

Your very affectionate father,
R. C.

LETTER CCCLXVI.

CHRISTIAN FREDERICK SWARTZ, the missionary, to the SON
of his deceased friend, Colonel Wood.

DEAR JOHN,

Tanjore, Sept. 22, 1780.

I have received your kind letter, and rejoiced that the son of my much-esteemed friend, who is now in eternity, goes on in learning such things as will make him useful in society. You learn Latin, geography, arithmetic, French, drawing; all which may be very serviceable to you, and beneficial to your fellow-creatures. I entreat you, therefore, to be very diligent, and to spend your time in the best manner. I remember that, when I learnt vocal music in my younger days, I did not think that I should use it much. And behold, now, every morning and evening, when the Malabar children come to prayer, I teach them to sing in praise of their Redeemer. Every week they learn

one hymn ; for they are slow. Now I am well pleased that I was instructed in vocal music. All things may become useful to us and others.

But then, my dear friend, our intention, our desires must be well managed ; or, in other words, our hearts must be truly minded. As you have spent many months and years in learning useful things, let your heart now be given over to your God : otherwise your learning will not prove beneficial ; nay, which is deplorable, it may be used to your detriment.

As you are so well placed, I beseech you, by the mercy of God, my dear John, to mind now the best, the one needful thing. Examine your heart ; and whatever you find in it that is not agreeable to the will of God (and you will find much of that sort) acknowledge it : bewail it before your God : entreat him to wash and cleanse you from all your sins. Rest not till you find rest to your soul.

Having obtained pardon and peace through Jesus, watch and pray that you may not lose what you have gained ; but that you may rather grow daily in faith, love, and hope.

In your conversation with young people be very cautious. Their thoughts and speeches are often too frothy ; aye, and even dangerous. Above all, try to gain strength, divine strength, to overcome that sinful bashfulness, whereby many people are ashamed to confess or practise what they approve in their hearts. If you read your Bible, and pray heartily to God, you will get strength every day to go on and prosper in his way.

Our time is but short. Eternity, awful, beautiful eternity, is at hand. Let us, therefore, not trifle away our time; but let us seek the Lord and his grace, his blessing, and his strength.

As you, my dear John, are blessed with a pious mother, who is unspeakably desirous of promoting your welfare, I hope you will take all possible care to comfort and rejoice her heart, by your humble obedience and grateful behaviour.

Though I never have seen your schoolmaster, it is enough to induce me to revere him, that we hear he is a faithful servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. May God bless him, and all that is under his care! So wishes

Your affectionate friend,
C. F. SWARTZ.

LETTER CCCLXVII.

REV. CLAUDIUS BUCHANAN, when in India, to his two young DAUGHTERS in England, after their mother's death, who died at sea, on the voyage to rejoin her husband.

I am now about to quit India, and to go home to see you. I propose to leave Calcutta in the course of next month. If I find it dangerous to go home over-land, I shall proceed from Bombay by sea. I shall probably sail over those waters where your dear mother lies. Do you not know, that at the resurrection of the dead she will come forth with a

“glorious body?” Though it be “sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory.” Of this you may read in the Bible, and in the burial service. Your mother will come forth with a “glorious body ;” for she was a good woman, and remembered her Creator in the days of her youth. Perhaps I shall die too before I reach England. You ought therefore to pray that God would preserve my life, if it be his will, (for I desire to do his will in all things,) that I may see you, and show you the affection of a father, and receive the affection of daughters, and lead you onward with myself to that happy state, whither your mother is gone before you.

Your affectionate father,

CLAUDIUS BUCHANAN.

LETTER CCCLXVIII.

MRS. SUSAN HUNTINGTON to her SON, at Andover.

MY DEAR J—,

Boston, January 13, 1823.

The imagination that religion will make them unhappy, is one of the most common, and one of the most successful temptations which the adversary of souls employs with people, especially with the young, to induce them to delay and delay the business of attending to their salvation, till it is too late to attend to it at all. One of the first religious exercises I remember, (I was not

more than three years old,) was a solemn consultation in my mind, whether it was best to become a Christian then or not. If I did not, I thought I was in a dangerous state. But then if I did,—why, I should never have any more comfort in this world. I must never laugh, never play, never enjoy myself; but be always solemn, and dull, and gloomy. The result was, that I concluded it not best to be a Christian yet. But, blessed be God! he pursued me with his grace, as I humbly hope, so that I found there could be no happiness, no comfort, while God and I were enemies. He broke up the enchantment of Satan, and showed me, that these dreams and plans of earthly delight were all false and fatal, and held up to me by the enemy of my soul to cheat me to perdition.

What pleasures will religion deprive you of, my son? May you not play just as innocently, and with more satisfaction, with religion than without it? Depend upon it, religion will not debar you from any reasonable and lawful pleasure. All that it forbids you is sin. And do you wish for a license to sin comfortably? God forbid. Every Christian will tell you that the law of God, which it is his delight to obey, leaves open to him the enjoyment of all those innocent comforts connected with our situation in this world as men, which his own mercy has so amply provided for us, and provided that they may be used. You have known me long, my J——, and been more capable of observing me since your dear father's death. Does religion deprive me of any pleasures? Does it diminish my

enjoyment? No, my dear child. To the honour and glory of my blessed Lord, let me tell you, it was this which held up my soul when passing through the deep waters, where there was no standing; which enabled me to rejoice in God, and to feel that, although my earthly prospects were shrouded in darkness, all was safe, all was well; which has enabled me sometimes to feel, that, though the whole creation were shivered to atoms, and mingled together in one universal wreck, I should still find all to be safe and well. I have given you to God, and I do so every day. You must, my dear boy, be his servant; and you shall find his service perfect freedom.

SECTION V.

LETTERS FROM OR TO MINISTERS, ON VARIOUS INTERESTING POINTS CONNECTED WITH THE MINISTERIAL AND PASTORAL FUNCTIONS.

LETTER CCCLXIX.

BISHOP GIBSON to DR. WATTS. “A word” *always* “in season, to ministers.”

GOOD SIR,

Whitehall, April 23, 1737.

I have perused your discourse upon humility ⁽¹⁾ with much satisfaction, and, I hope, with profit to

⁽¹⁾ Dr. Watts’s “Discourse on Humility represented in the character of St. Paul.”

myself; if not I am sure it is my own fault. There was no occasion to make the apology for descending to the lowest scenes of life. It is a fault both in preaching and writing upon practical subjects, when we keep too much to general reasoning, and do not bring down our doctrines to common life, which are best remembered, and take the fastest hold upon the mind and consciences of our hearers and readers.

I wish you a full enjoyment of health, that you may be able to proceed in your good designs for the benefit of religion; and am, with great truth and esteem,

Sir, your, &c.

LETTER CCCLXX.

REV. JOHN NEWTON to a NOBLEMAN. Important remarks on pastoral visits to the sick and dying. Practical proofs they afford of the truth of the gospel. Important lessons they are calculated to teach.

MY LORD,

March 10, 1774.

For about six weeks past I have had occasion to spend several hours of almost every day with the sick and the dying. These scenes are to a minister like walking the hospitals to a young surgeon. The various cases which occur, exemplify, illustrate, and explain, with a commanding energy, many truths, which may be learned indeed at home, but

cannot be so well understood, or their force so sensibly felt, without the advantage of experience and observation. As physicians, besides that competent general knowledge of their profession which should be common to them all, have usually their several favourite branches of study, some applying themselves more to botany, others to chemistry, others to anatomy ; so ministers, as their inclinations and gifts differ, are led more closely to consider some particular branch of the system of divine truth. Some are directed to state and defend the doctrines of the gospel ; some have a talent for elucidating difficult texts of Scripture ; some have a turn for explaining the prophetical parts, and so of the rest. For myself, if it be lawful to speak of myself, and so far as I can judge, anatomy is my favourite branch ; I mean the study of the human heart, with its workings and counter-workings, as it is differently affected in a state of nature or of grace, in the different seasons of prosperity, adversity, conviction, temptation, sickness, and the approach of death. The Lord, by sending me hither, provided me a good school for these purposes. I know not where I could have had a better, or affording a greater variety of characters, in proportion to the number of people ; and as they are mostly a poor people, and strangers to that address which is the result of education and converse with the world, there is a simplicity in what they say or do, which gives me a peculiar advantage in judging of their cases.

But I was about to speak of death. Though the

grand evidence of those truths upon which our hopes are built, arises from the authority of God speaking them in his word, and revealing them by his Spirit to the awakened heart; (for till the heart is awakened it is incapable of receiving this evidence;) yet some of these truths are so mysterious, so utterly repugnant to the judgment of depraved nature, that, through the remaining influence of unbelief and vain reasoning, the temptations of Satan, and the subtle arguments with which some men, reputed wise, attack the foundations of our faith, the minds even of believers are sometimes capable of being shaken. I know no better corroborating evidence for the relief of the mind under such assaults than the testimony of dying persons, especially of such as have lived out of the noise of controversy, and who, perhaps, never heard a syllable of what has been started in these evil days, against the Deity of Christ, his atonement, and other important articles. Permit me, my Lord, to relate, upon this occasion, some things which exceedingly struck me in the conversation I had with a young woman whom I visited in her last illness about two years ago. She was a sober, prudent person, of plain sense, could read her Bible, but had read little beside: her knowledge of the world was nearly confined to the parish; for I suppose she was seldom, if ever, twelve miles from home in her life. She had known the gospel about seven years before the Lord visited her with a lingering consumption, which at length removed her to a better world. A few days before her death, I had

been praying by her bed-side, and in my prayer I thanked the Lord, that he gave her now to see that she had not followed cunningly-devised fables. When I had finished, she repeated that word, "No, she said, not cunningly-devised fables; these are realities indeed; I feel their truth, I feel their comfort. O tell my friends, tell my acquaintance, tell enquiring souls, tell poor sinners, tell all the daughters of Jerusalem, (alluding to Solomon's Song, from which she had just before desired me to preach at her funeral,) what Jesus has done for my soul. Tell them, that now in the time of need I find him my beloved and my friend, and as such I commend him to them." She then fixed her eyes steadfastly upon me, and proceeded, as well as I can recollect, as follows: "Sir, you are highly favoured in being called to preach the gospel. I have often heard you with pleasure; but give me leave to tell you, that I now see all you have said, or can say, is comparatively but little. Nor till you come into my situation, and have death and eternity full in your view, will it be possible for you to conceive the vast weight and importance of the truths you declare. Oh! sir, it is a serious thing to die; no words can express what is needful to support the soul in the solemnity of a dying hour."

I believe it was the next day when I visited her again. After some discourse as usual, she said, with a remarkable vehemence of speech, "Are you sure I cannot be mistaken?" I answered without hesitation, "Yes, I am sure. I am not afraid to say, my soul for yours that you are right." She paused

a little, and then replied, " You say true, I know I am right. I feel that my hope is fixed upon the Rock of ages: I know in whom I have believed. Yet if you could see with my eyes, you would not wonder at my question. But the approach of death presents a prospect, which is till then hidden from us, and which cannot be described." She said much more to the same purpose; and in all she spoke there was a dignity, weight, and evidence, which I suppose few professors of divinity, when lecturing from the chair, have at any time equalled. We may well say with Elihu, " Who teacheth like him?" Many instances of the like kind I have met with here. I have a poor girl near me who looks like an idiot, and her natural capacity is, indeed, very small; but the Lord has been pleased to make her acquainted alternately with great temptations, and proportionably great discoveries of his love and truth. Sometimes, when her heart is enlarged, I listen to her with astonishment. I think no books or ministers I ever met with have given me such an impression and understanding of what the apostle styles *τα βαθη του Θεου*, as I have upon some occasions received from her conversation.

But I am rambling again. My attendance upon the sick is not always equally comfortable, but could I learn aright, it might be equally instructive. Some confirm the preciousness of a Saviour to me, by the cheerfulness with which, through faith in his name, they meet the king of terrors. Others no less confirm it, by the terror and reluctance they discover when they find they must die;

for though there are too many who sadly slight the blessed gospel while they are in health, yet in this place most are too far enlightened to be quite thoughtless about their souls, if they retain their senses in their last illness. Then, like the foolish virgins, they say, "Give us of your oil:" then they are willing that ministers and professors should pray with them and speak to them. Through the Lord's goodness, several whom I have visited in these circumstances have afforded me good hope; they have been savingly changed by his blessing upon what has passed at the eleventh hour. I have seen a marvellous and blessed change take place in their language, views, and tempers, in a few days. I now visit a young person, who is cut short in her nineteenth year by a consumption, and I think cannot live many days. I found her very ignorant and insensible, and she remained so a good while; but of late I hope her heart is touched.—She feels her lost state, she seems to have some right desires, she begins to pray, and in such a manner as I cannot but hope the Lord is teaching her, and will reveal himself to her before she departs. But it is sometimes otherwise. I saw a young woman die last week; I had been often with her; but the night she was removed she could only say, "O, I cannot live, I cannot live!" She repeated this mournful complaint as long as she could speak; for as the vital powers were more oppressed, her voice was changed into groans; her groans grew fainter and fainter, and in about a quarter of an hour after she had done speaking she expired. Poor thing; I

thought, as I stood by her bed-side, if you were a duchess, in this situation, what could the world do for you now ? I thought, likewise, how many things are there that now give us pleasure or pain, and assume a mighty importance in our view, which, in a dying hour, will be no more to us than the clouds which fly unnoticed over our heads. Then the truth of our Lord's aphorism will be seen, felt, and acknowledged, " One thing is needful ;" and we shall be ready to apply Grotius's dying confession to (alas !) a great part of our lives, *Ah vitam perdididi nihil agendo laboriose.*

Your lordship allows me to send unpremeditated letters. I need not assure you this is one.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCCLXXI.

REV. JOHN NEWTON to REV. Mr. S——, a minister suffering from depression of spirits, and complaining of the ill success of his labours.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

July 7, 1770.

I received your piteous doleful letter ; I hope it is needless now to attempt to comfort you, and that this will find Satan cast out, and the man restored to his right mind, sitting at the feet of Jesus. I pity you that you have so many conflicts ; yet I rejoice with you, because I know the Lord intends you good by these tossings, and will thereby keep

you humble and dependent. Is it not better to be sifted and shaken, than to be left to fall in such snares as some have been taken in, whom you have accounted better than yourself? But why are you so ready to throw down your shield, and to talk of running away from the battle? He that harasses you while you hold the gospel-plough, would be presently with you if you were ploughing in the field. Nor can any change of circumstances put you out of his reach, unless you could tell how to run away from yourself.

It is said, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn." I am sure the Lord has not muzzled you: how is it then, that while you set forth a free salvation to others, you do not feed upon it yourself; but contradict your own preaching, and reason and complain, as though you had found out that the blood of Jesus Christ cannot cleanse from all sin; or, as though the Lord were as changeable as you are? I know you are a staunch Calvinist in your judgment, or I should think you an Arminian, by some of your complaints.

When the enemy would tempt you to murmur about a provision, tell him that he knows, (for he walks to and fro on the earth,) that, taking the kingdom round, there is not one minister of the gospel in ten, so well provided for as you. And if so, you may ask him, if you have not much more cause for thankfulness than murmuring. What you have, the Lord has given you; if he sees that is too little,

he will moreover give you such and such things.⁽¹⁾ But then it must be in his way and time, and not in your own. How can you teach others to live a life of faith, except you learn, by daily experience, to live it yourself? And the life of faith is maintained, not by bags and coffers, but by pleading the promises in prayer, when we have nothing else to look to.

As to the success of your ministry, it is no part of your concern, further than to make it matter of prayer. Faithfulness and diligence is our part; the rest is the Lord's. I suppose you are quite as acceptable in B——, as Jeremiah was in Jerusalem; and probably see more to encourage you in your hearers, than he did in his. He was not very popular, but he was plain and honest; and if not owned to save the souls of others, he delivered his own. And, after all, the Lord did just as much by him, as he purposed before he called him; and he did not a tittle more than he had purposed beforehand, by the preaching of St. Paul.

But it seems, you think other people preach better than you. I hope you will always think so; if you should be mistaken, it is a fault on the right side. But other people think so too. I am not so sure of that; but if they do, it is perhaps to chastise you for your unbelieving fears. If you have a mind to outdo yourself, and to outdo us all, I will give you a receipt—Believe. The more you believe, the better you will preach. If the ministers they

(¹) 2 Sam. xii. 8.

commend are faithful, simple preachers of the truth, depend upon it, the more your people like them, the more they will like you. I believe you are as free from a fear of being outshone by others as most men ; but there is some of this leaven in all our hearts : let us watch and pray against it, and heartily wish and pray, that all who preach Jesus, may do it with more power and success than we can ourselves. We shall not be the poorer for their riches ; but our Lord and theirs will take it well of us ; and if he sees us simply content to take the lowest place, he will raise us up higher ; for it is a standing law in his kingdom, that he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

I have touched on all your complaints, and brought myself to the end of my paper. Notwithstanding what I have written, I could fill a sheet with sorrowful stories in my turn ; but “The Lord is good.”

I am affectionately yours.

LETTER CCCLXXII.

REV. JOHN NEWTON to the Rev. Mr. S——. Caution and encouragement.

MY DEAR SIR,

May 31, 1775.

Though we agreed to wave apologies, it would become me to make a very humble one if I should long delay writing, now you have favoured me

with a second letter. I thank you for both : it gives us real pleasure to hear of your and Mrs. * * * 's welfare.

I rejoice that the Lord keeps your spirit alive in his work, and lets you see that your labour is not in vain. O the honour, the blessedness of being an instrument in his hands of feeding his gathered sheep and lambs, and bringing wanderers into his fold! That is a striking and beautiful thought of the apostle, "as poor, yet making many rich." When I feel my own poverty, my heart wandering, my head confused, graces languid, gifts apparently dormant; when I thus stand up with half a loaf, or less, before a multitude, and see the bread multiply in the breaking, and that, however it may be at the time with myself as to my own feelings, the hungry, the thirsty, the mourners in Sion are not wholly disappointed; when I find that some, in the depth of their outward afflictions, can rejoice in me, as the messenger by whom the Lord is pleased to send them a word in season, balm for their wounds, and cordials for their cases, then, indeed, I magnify mine office. Let who will take the lead in the cabinets of princes: let those whom the Lord permits shine in the eyes of men, as statesmen, generals, or favourites, He has given me the desire of my heart, and I am more disposed to pity than to envy those whom the world admires. On the day when the Lord admitted me into the ministry, and I received ordination, I thought he had then ennobled me, and raised me to greater honour and preferment than any earthly king

could have bestowed ; and, blessed be his name, I think so still, and had rather be curate of * * * than in any situation the world can afford, if detached from the privilege of preaching the gospel. Yet I find the ministry a bitter sweet ; the pleasure is tempered with many things that make a near and painful impression upon the spirit ; but, upon the whole, it is given unto me (and I trust to you likewise) to rejoice in it.

The civility of your genteel neighbours is an agreeable circumstance, so far as it can be preserved without inconvenience. I am quite of your mind, that our calling as Christians does not require us to be cynical, and that many professors, and perhaps preachers, bring needless trouble upon themselves, for want of a gentle loving spirit. The gospel teaches us to show benevolence and an obliging carriage to all. Yet there is an extreme upon the other hand, which is, upon the whole, more dangerous. They are singularly favoured whom the Lord is pleased to guide and to keep in the golden mean. What we call a polite and cultivated behaviour, is certainly no real bar to that faithfulness we owe to God or man ; and if maintained under a strict scriptural restraint, may greatly soften prejudices, and conciliate the goodwill even of unawakened hearers in a considerable degree. But, indeed, those who have it, have need of a double guard of watchfulness and prayer, for *latet anquis in herba* ; and unless the eye be kept very single, and the heart dependent upon the Lord, we are more liable to be drawn into a com-

pliance with the ways of the polite world, than likely to prevail on them to follow us, so far as we follow Christ. And I could name instances where it has appeared to me, that the probable good effects of a very faithful testimony in the pulpit, have (humanly speaking) been wholly defeated, by too successful endeavours to be agreeable out of it. The world will often permit a minister to think, and perhaps to preach as he pleases, provided he will come as near them as possible in a sociable conformity. *Sat verbum sapienti.* I hope you will not be angry with me, but rather impute it to my cordial affection, if I feel some fears, lest the kindness of your neighbours should insensibly, in some degree at least, damp your zeal and abate your influence. I trust my fears are groundless, and my admonitions quite unnecessary; but let me plead the old line in my excuse;

Res est solliciti plena timoris amor.

I see you possessed of all advantages, recommended by family, situation, education, and address, and encompassed, it seems, with people who are disposed to receive you favourably upon these accounts. I see you stand in a post of honour, and therefore I know Satan eyes you, and watches subtilly for an advantage against you. Were he to raise a storm of persecution against you, and attack you openly, I should be in little pain for the event. For I believe the Lord has given you such a sense of the worth of the gospel, that you would not be threatened easily into a timid silence; and, per-

haps, that natural warmth of temper which you speak of, might be of some advantage were the assault made on this side. This, perhaps, Satan knows; he knows how to suit temptations to tempers and circumstances; and if, like Achilles, you have a vulnerable heel, I apprehend you more in danger of suffering loss by the smiles than by the frowns of men. Since I have seen some eminent ministers, whom I need not name to you, so sadly hurt, both in their experience and in their usefulness (and many more in private life,) by worldly connexions, I am ready perhaps to take the alarm, and to sound the alarm too soon. But I know that the heart is deceitful in all, and I know that often the first steps by which we deviate from the path of duty, diverge so gently and imperceptibly from the right line, that we may have actually lost our way before we are sensible we have missed the road. After all, I hope this, my grave remonstrance, has sprung entirely from my own misapprehension of a few lines in your first letter, and will stand for nothing but to show that I love you, and that, professing myself a friend, I dare be faithful. If you think me faulty, of course you will not write till you have forgiven me, and therefore I hope you will forgive me soon, or my punishment will be heavy enough.

The Lord has transplanted some more of my flowers, or rather his own, to flourish in a better climate; but he has likewise given us a few slips and seedlings to supply their place. The word does not flourish here as I ought to wish it, but,

through mercy, it is not wholly without effect. We are in good harmony ; ordinances are prized, and a gospel conversation maintained, by those who profess. Should you ask, how it is with myself, I know not what answer to give. My experience is made up of enigmas, but the sum and solution of all is, That I am a vile creature, but I have a good Lord. He has chosen me ; and I, through his rich grace, have chosen him. I trust there is an engagement between him and my soul, which shall never be broken, because he has undertaken for both parts, that he never will forsake me, and that I never shall forsake him. O, I like those royal, sovereign words, “ I will,” and “ You shall !” How sweetly are they suited to the sense and long experience he has given me of my own weakness, and the power and subtilty of Satan ! If my conflicts terminate in victory, it must be owing to his own arm, and for his own name’s sake ; for I in myself have neither strength nor plea. If I were not so poor, so sick, so foolish, the power, skill, riches, wisdom, and mercy of my Physician, Shepherd, and Saviour, would not be so signally illustrated in my own case. Upon this account, instead of complaining, we may glory in our infirmities. O, it is pleasant to be deeply indebted to him, to find him, and own him all in all :

Our husband, shepherd, brother, friend,
Our guide and guard, our way and end !

I beg a frequent interest in your prayers, and remain,

Dear Sir, your affectionate and obliged.

LETTER CCCLXXIII.

REV. JOHN NEWTON to REV. S——. A letter of reproof, caution, and encouragement.

DEAR SIR,

Feb. 15, 1762.

I have been often thinking of you since your removal, and was glad to receive your letter to-day. I hope you will still go on to find more and more encouragement to believe, that the Lord has disposed and led you to the step you have taken. For though I wrote with the greatest plainness and earnestness, and would, if in my power, have prevented it while under deliberation, yet now it is done and past recal, I would rather help than dishearten you. Indeed, I cannot say that my view of the affair is yet altered. The best way not to be cast down hereafter, is not to be too sanguine at first. You know there is something pleasing in novelty ; as yet you are new to them, and they to you : I pray God that you may find as cordial a regard from them as at present, when you have been with them as many years as in the place you came from. And if you have grace to be watchful and prayful, all will be well ; for we serve a gracious Master, who knows how to overrule even our mistakes to his glory and our own advantage. Yet I observe, that when we do wrong, sooner or later we smart for our indiscretion ; perhaps many years afterwards. After we have seen and confessed our fault, and received repeated proofs of pardoning love, as to the

guilt, yet chastisement, to remind us more sensibly of our having done amiss, will generally find us out. So it was with David in the matter of Uriah; the Lord put away his sin, healed his broken bones, and restored unto him the light of his countenance; yet many troubles, in consequence of this affair, followed one upon another, till at length (many years afterwards) he was driven from Jerusalem by his own son. So it was with Jacob: he dealt deceitfully with his brother Esau; notwithstanding this the Lord appeared to him and blessed him, gave him comfortable promises, and revealed himself to him from time to time; yet after an interval of twenty years his fault was brought afresh to his remembrance, and his heart trembled within him when he heard his brother was coming with armed men to meet him. And thus I have found it in my own experience: things which I had forgotten a long while have been brought to my mind by providential dispensations which I little expected; but the first rise of which I have been able to trace far back, and forced to confess, that the Lord is indeed He that judgeth the heart and trieth the reins. I hint this for your caution: you know best upon what grounds you have proceeded; but if, (though I do not affirm it, I hope otherwise,) I say, if you have acted too much in your own spirit, been too hasty and precipitate; if you have not been sufficiently tender of your people, nor thoughtful of the consequences which your departure will probably involve them in; if you were impatient under the Lord's hand, and, instead of waiting his time

and way of removing the trials and difficulties you found, you have ventured upon an attempt to free and mend yourself; I say, if any of these things have mixed with your determinations, something will fall out to show you your fault: either you will not find the success you hope for, or friends will grow cold, or enemies and difficulties you dream not of will present themselves, or your own mind will alter, so as what seems now most pleasant will afford you little pleasure. Yet though I write thus, I do not mean (as I said before) to discourage you, but that you may be forewarned, humble, and watchful. If you should at any time have a different view of things, you may take comfort from the instances I have mentioned. The trials of David and Jacob were sharp; but they were short, and they proved to their advantage, put them upon acts of humiliation and prayer, and ended in a double blessing. Nothing can harm us that quickens our earnestness and frequency in applying to a throne of grace: only trust the Lord, and keep close to him, and all that befalls you shall be for good. Temptations end in victory; troubles prove an increase of consolation; yea, our very falls and failings tend to increase our spiritual wisdom, to give us a greater knowledge of Satan's devices, and make us more habitually upon our guard against them. Happy case of the believer in Jesus! when bitten by the fiery serpent he needs not go far for a remedy; he has only to look to a bleeding Saviour, and be healed.

I think one great advantage that attends a removal

into a new place is, that it gives an easy opportunity of forming a new plan, and breaking off any little habits which we have found inconvenient, and yet perhaps could not so readily lay aside, where our customs and acquaintance had been long formed. I earnestly recommend you to reflect, if you cannot recollect some things which you have hitherto omitted, which may properly be now taken up; some things formerly allowed, which may now with ease and convenience be laid aside. I only give the hint in general; for I have nothing in particular to charge you with. I recommend to you to be very choice of your time, especially the fore part of the day; let your morning-hours be devoted to prayer, reading, and study; and suffer not the importunity of friends to rob you of the hours before noon, without a just necessity: and if you accustom yourself to rise early in the morning, you will find a great advantage. Be careful to avoid losing your thoughts, whether in books or otherwise, upon any subjects which are not of a direct subserviency to your great design, till towards dinner-time: the afternoon is not so favourable to study; this is a proper time for paying and receiving visits, conversing among your friends, or unbending with a book of instructive entertainment, such as history, &c. which may increase your general knowledge, without a great confinement of your attention; but let the morning-hours be sacred. I think you would likewise find advantage in using your pen more: write short notes upon the Scriptures you read, or transcribe the labours of others; make ex-

tracts from your favourite authors, especially those who, besides a fund of spiritual and evangelical matter, have a happy talent of expressing their thoughts in a clear and lively, or pathetic manner; you would find a continued exercise in this way would be greatly useful to form your own style, and help your delivery and memory; you would become insensibly master of their thoughts, and find it more easy to express yourself justly and clearly: what we only read we easily lose, but what we commit to paper is not so soon forgot. Especially remember, (what you well know, but we cannot too often remind each other,) that frequent secret prayer is the life of all we do. If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, and it shall be given; but all our diligence will fail, if we are remiss in this particular. I am glad it is not thought necessary for you to go to London on this occasion. I hope you will not think it necessary upon any other account. Rather keep close to the work you have undertaken, and endeavour to avoid any thing that looks like ostentation, or a desire to be taken notice of. You see I advise you with the freedom of a friend who loves you, and longs to see your work and your soul prosper.

You will, I doubt not, endeavour to promote the practice of frequent prayer in the houses that receive you. I look upon prayer-meetings as the most profitable exercises (excepting the public preaching) in which Christians can engage: they have a direct tendency to kill a worldly trifling spirit, to draw down a divine blessing upon all our

concerns, compose differences, and enkindle (at least to maintain) the flame of divine love amongst brethren. But I need not tell you the advantages; you know them; I only would exhort you; and the rather, as I find in my own case the principal cause of my leanness and unfruitfulness is owing to an unaccountable backwardness to pray. I can write, or read, or converse, or hear, with a ready will; but prayer is more spiritual and inward than any of these; and the more spiritual any duty is, the more my carnal heart is apt to start from it. May the Lord pour forth his precious spirit of prayer and supplication in both our hearts.

I am not well pleased with the account you give of so many dry bones. It increases my wonder, that you could so readily exchange so much plump flesh and blood as you had about you for a parcel of skeletons. I wish they may not haunt you, and disturb your peace. God grant that your prayers may be answered; but if I knew a man who possessed a field in a tolerable soil, which had afforded him some increase every year; and if this man, after having bestowed seven years' labour in cultivating, weeding, manuring, fencing, &c. just when he has brought his ground (in his neighbour's judgment) into good order, and might reasonably hope for larger crops than he had ever yet seen, should suddenly forego all his advantages, leave his good seed for the birds to eat, pull up the young fences which cost him so much pains to plant, and all this for the sake of making a new experiment upon the top of a mountain; though I might heartily wish him

great success I could not honestly give him great encouragement. You have parted with that for a trifle, which in my eyes seems an inestimable jewel; I mean the hearts and affections of an enlightened people. This appears to me one of the greatest honours and greatest pleasures a faithful minister can possess, and which many faithful and eminent ministers have never been able to obtain. This gave you a vast advantage; your gift was more acceptable there than that of any other person, and more than you will probably find elsewhere. For I cannot make a comparison between the hasty approbation of a few, whose eyes are but beginning to open, and their affections and passions to warm, so that they must, if possible, have the man that first catches their attention; I say, I cannot think this worthy to be compared to the regard of a people who understood the gospel, were able to judge of men and doctrines, and had tried of you for so many years. It is, indeed, much to your honour, (it proves that you were faithful, diligent, and exemplary,) that the people proved so attached to you; but that you should force yourself from them, when they so dearly loved you, and so much needed you, this has made all your friends in these parts to wonder, and your enemies to rejoice; and I, alas! know not what to answer in your behalf to either. Say not, "I hate this Micaiah, for he prophesies not good of me, but evil;" but allow me the privilege of a friend. My heart is full when I think of what has happened, and what will probably be the consequence. In a few words, I am strongly persuaded

you have taken an unadvised step, and would therefore prepare you for the inconvenience and uneasiness you may probably meet with. And if I am (as I desire I may prove) mistaken, my advice will do no harm; you will want something to balance the caresses and success you meet with.

We should be very glad to see you, and hope you will take your measures, when you do come, to lengthen your usual stay, in proportion to the difference of the distance. Pray for us.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCCLXXIV.

REV. JOHN NEWTON to REV. MR. B——. Caution respecting allegorical interpretation of the Scripture.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Oct. 1778.

Your letters are always welcome; the last doubly so, for being unexpected. If you never heard before of a line of yours being useful, I will tell you for once, that I get some pleasure and instruction whenever you write to me. And I see not but your call to letter-writing is as clear as mine, at least when you are able to put pen to paper.

I must say something to your queries about 2 Sam. xiv. I do not approve of the scholastic distinctions about inspiration, which seem to have a tendency to explain away the authority and cer-

tainty of one half of the Bible at least. Though the penmen of Scripture were ever so well informed of some facts, they would, as you observe, need express, full, and infallible inspiration, to teach them which the Lord would have selected and recorded for the use of the church, amongst many others which to themselves might appear equally important.

However, with respect to historical passages, I dare not pronounce positively that any of them are, even in the literal sense, unworthy of the wisdom of the Holy Ghost, and the dignity of inspiration. Some, yea, many of them, have often appeared trivial to me; but I check the thought, and charge it to my own ignorance and temerity. It must have some importance, because I read it in God's book. On the other hand, though I will not deny that they may all have a spiritual and mystical sense, (for I am no more qualified to judge of the deep things of the Spirit, than to tell you what is passing this morning at the bottom of the sea;) yet if, with my present modicum of light, I should undertake to expound many passages in a mystical sense, I fear such a judge as you would think my interpretations fanciful, and not well supported. I suppose I should have thought the Bible complete, though it had not informed me of the death of Rebekah's nurse, or where she was buried. But some tell me that Deborah is the law, and that by the oak I am to understand the cross of Christ: and I remember to have heard of a preacher who discovered a type of Christ crucified in Absalom hanging by the hair

on another oak. I am quite a mole when compared with these eagle-eyed divines; and must often content myself with plodding upon the lower ground of accommodation and allusion, except when the New-Testament writers assure me what the mind of the Holy Ghost was. I can find the gospel with more confidence in the history of Sarah and Hagar, than in that of Leah and Rachel; though, without Paul's help, I should have considered them both as family-squabbles, recorded chiefly to illustrate the general truth, that vanity and vexation of spirit are incident to the best men, in the most favoured situations. And I think there is no part of Old Testament history from which I could not (the Lord helping me) draw observations, that might be suitable to the pulpit, and profitable to his people: so I might perhaps from Livy or Tacitus. But then, with the Bible in my hands, I go upon sure grounds: I am certain of the facts I speak from, that they really did happen. I may likewise depend upon the springs and motives of actions, and not amuse myself and my hearers with speeches which were never spoken, and motives which were never thought of, till the historian rummaged his pericranium for something to embellish his work. I doubt not but were you to consider Joab's courtly conduct only in a literal sense, how it tallied with David's desire, and how gravely and graciously he granted himself a favour, while he professed to oblige Joab: I say, in this view you would be able to illustrate many important scriptural doctrines, and to show that the

passage is important to those who are engaged in studying the anatomy of the human heart.

I am, &c.

LETTER CCCLXXV.

REV. JOB ORTON to the REV. THOMAS STEDMAN. A second curacy valuable for a somewhat unusual reason. Thoughts on preaching. Advantages of addressing a country congregation, &c.

DEAR SIR,

March 30, 1772.

I am glad of your second curacy, as it enlarges your work, rather than as it increaseth your wages. I was lately reading of a clergyman in your county, who had two small livings, at which he officiated as you purpose doing. He went to the weak and old at each place; and the strong followed him reciprocally.

The plan of your introductory discourse which you sent me, of "not seeking theirs, but them,"⁽¹⁾ is extremely pertinent and good. A sermon on the Spring, a few Sundays hence, as illustrating the spread of the gospel in the world; and the progress and nature of a work of grace in the heart, and the resurrection of the dead, may be very striking and useful. See Mark, iv. 26—29; Isaiah, xxvi. 19; Solomon's Song, ii. 11, 12. Men love sermons that come home to their business and bosoms.

(¹) 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

I am very sensible of your weight of business; but you will not be disheartened, especially as you will, I hope, more and more see (in the *mercantile* style) that it *answers very well*. You know who could “do all things *εν Χριστω ενδυναμεντι*,” (‘) and there your eyes will be continually directed. Even St. Paul could not do without *that*: and *with* that, who cannot do?

I know not what to say about *extemporary preaching*. It may, on some accounts, be desirable and useful; but I dare not encourage it in *young divines*. I never knew an instance of it, but the preacher was careless in his studies, slovenly and incorrect in his discourses; and losing the habit of accurate composing, could never recover it afterwards. Yet I would by no means desire you to confine yourself entirely to your notes. When a thought strikes you, or something in your sermon seems to strike your hearers, you may add a few sentences, as you find matter arising in your mind; and, if you are thoroughly master of your subject, and have a good deal of your sermon, especially the application of it, committed to memory, thus much will be easy, and you will not hesitate and appear at a loss. But, suppose you preach at your new church sermons which you have delivered at Little Cheverel half a year ago; not exactly as written, but commit the substance, every leading thought, and the texts which you have introduced into them, to memory, and then enlarge *pro re natâ*. Or, you

(‘) Phil. iv. 13.

may compose and write out one new sermon every week, and let it be preached at your churches alternately ; and then on the other part of the day have at the other church, your plan, texts, and leading thoughts only written down, and discourse to your people from them. So that each place will have a complete, and a kind of *extemporary* discourse alternately. But then, if you do this as it ought to be done, it will very little lessen your labour ; for it will require as much pains in studying your plan, texts, and subordinate thoughts, and putting them down, as in writing a sermon at large.

.

I have known so many ministers become injudicious and unacceptable by a careless habit of composing or rather not at all, in their younger days, and in small country places, that I make these concessions, guarded as they are, with fear. The other extreme is best for a young divine to err in. Besides, there is no way by which you will so speedily and effectually increase your fund of theological knowledge, as by accurate composures. Thus, you will study your subject carefully, viewing and examining it on every side, consulting all the commentators you may have upon your text and parallel places, and reading what other divines (whose writings you may be possessed of) have said upon the subject. So that were you to read nothing for a whole week, but what you would read in this method (except history, classics, &c. by way of relaxation) I should commend your diligence, and say, you had kept to the good maxim, *hoc age*.

I am glad to hear of the encouragement you meet with ! How happy are you in having such opportunities of preaching to those to whom the gospel (in our view of it) is a kind of novelty. Our dissenters in general have heard of it, till they nauseate it : so that there is little hope of its doing them any good. This leads so many of our divines to try what philosophy and abstract representations of virtue will do, without the peculiarities of the gospel. But if they do good, it is more than I ever saw or heard of. God is wiser than men. And if his remedies will not do, men's will not ; and the disease is incurable. However, we must go on to try them, and wait on him for success.

.
Of a *pious minister* I read, that he found his labours had little effect upon his own parishioners, but much upon his occasional and accidental hearers. Of *another*, that being complained of by a neighbouring clergyman, for drawing away his parishioners on a Sunday, he answered, " I have preached them here, let him, if he will, preach them back again." Old bishop Latimer told such a complaining divine, " Feed your flock better, and then they won't stray." Such hints as these from eminent and experienced ministers have always a great weight on my mind ; in reading the lives of eminent men, you will do well to insert in a pocket-book or vade-mecum, any hints of stories, facts, or remarks, which you would wish to remember, or would be proper to quote in sermons or conversa-

tion. Unless your memory be much better than mine ever was, you will find this necessary. I congratulate you on the *approach* of *spring*, when every scene will be enlivened around you, and a country village will become a kind of paradise. It gives me pleasure to think what favourable opportunities of usefulness you will have in your rural walks, to see your farmers and shepherds at work ; or talking with them and their servants about their occupations, in an easy and natural way, grafting some religious hints upon it, directing them to spiritualize their labours, and rise to God, and Christ, and heaven, by their common occurrences. And, while you exhort them in the words of Solomon, to “be diligent to know the state of their flocks, and to look well to their herds,”⁽¹⁾ you will, like a good shepherd, take the hint yourself. May the dews of divine grace be largely diffused into you and your flock, that you may be adorned with all the beauty of Christian graces, and abound in all the fruits of righteousness !

I am your affectionate,

And faithful humble servant,

JOB ORTON.

⁽¹⁾ Prov. xxvii. 23.

LETTER CCCLXXVI.

REV. JOB ORTON to the REV. THOMAS STEDMAN.
Thoughts on pastoral visiting and preaching.

DEAR SIR,

October 16, 1772.

My long illness this summer threw me so much behindhand with my correspondents, that I have not yet been able to recover that punctuality which I should be glad to maintain. I bless God I have been in better health and spirits for three weeks past, than for three months before, and, indeed, am now as well as I ever expect to be. But the wetness of the season is a hinderance to my riding, walking, writing—every thing. My mind is freer from tormenting fears; but either these bad nerves, or something worse, deprive me of those comfortable hopes I wish to enjoy. But the divine Physician, whose regimen is always right, may see it best to keep some of his patients *low*. They may not bear a higher diet: probably the health of the soul may be best promoted by it; and then all will be well in the issue.

I rejoice in your encouragement in your *pastoral visits*. You have, I think, gone as far as you prudently can at first. As your intimacy with your people increases, they will be more open in conversation with you, and then you may properly put particular questions to them. For instance: “Do you *pray* in secret? With a form, and what form? or without?” So, as to family prayer. Your method of *lending books*, &c. is very useful, as it will

furnish you with some natural questions about their attention and improvement; which will not appear forced or lugged in, and so not terrify them, nor appear impertinent in you. It would be well to *pray with families*, wherever you think it can prudently be done; and hints may be dropped in prayer inoffensively, which may show them their duty. Mr. Henry saith, "Prayer may preach." And I have often found persons observing and improving such hints which could not be given in an address to *them* without danger of offence. But caution is necessary here, not to let them see too plainly what you think of their state. This may be dangerous both ways. Petitions grounded on the treachery of the heart, the frequency and danger of self-deceit, and for divine search, illumination, and guidance, are always proper and useful; except you have reason to believe your friends are established Christians. Even common appellations, as *thy servant*, *thy hand-maid*, may in some cases do harm, as you know, and will know, how prone persons are to catch at any shadow of hope without penitence and faith. *This person*, or *this our friend*, is less dangerous language. It is good to pray particularly for *children* and *servants* in a family. This pleases and edifies them, and may suggest useful hints to them and their superiors: but to be too particular is wrong. I think it a very useful way to inquire of the *younger* children, whether they remember the text of the last Sunday's sermon, (as their parents should be desired to teach it them;) and of the *elder* children, whether they

remember any thing of the sermon. When they expect such an inquiry, they will be more attentive, and then you may familiarly talk over something of the sermon with them, particularly what was most suited to their capacity and circumstances. I assure you, I have often learned much from the answers of little children to such queries ; learned what part of a sermon they best understood, were affected with, what kind of sentiments or language struck them ; and so knew how better to preach to *children*, that is, to nine parts in ten of every auditory ; for so many are children in understanding. *To talk over with them any remarkable occurrence* in the parish or neighbourhood, as the death of a child—sudden death—the season of the year, or uncommon phenomena, may be useful ; or sometimes to give each a text of Scripture (always a short one) to remember and think of against the next meeting, and then talk it over with them ; especially a text suited to any particular failing in them, or circumstance of their family—as against lying, idleness, love of finery, of slovenliness—sleeping at church, or playing on the sabbath ;—or, suppose once in a year you were to preach a sermon to children, and give notice of it the preceding Sunday. To have your notes with you in the pulpit, yet to enlarge, as occasion may require, is best. When pious, pertinent thoughts arise, pursue them, as far as you find matter flow easily. *Application* is the life and soul of preaching : warm addresses, according to your hearers' different characters, stations, and circumstances, will be useful.

After your pastoral visits or catechising, *keep hints* of what you learn and observe, which may direct the strain or pointing of your public discourses. Teaching is one of the best ways of learning; and there is in a minister's work, as in matter, action and reaction. His own soul and his people's will thus be reciprocally influenced. Perhaps nothing is more necessary, than frequently and plainly to caution persons, especially the sick, against *laying an undue stress on the Lord's Supper*, having wrong notions of it, and expecting from it what it was never designed to produce or convey. I have known some worthy clergymen complain of their great embarrassment in this respect. And as it is very grievous to have any thing like arguing and disputing with the sick and dying, this should often be done in the pulpit and conversation when they are well. But enough of these subjects.

I am truly concerned on account of Dr. Stonehouse's mournful accounts from India,⁽¹⁾ and very tenderly sympathize with him under this severe trial; knowing how much a person of his delicate frame and irritable nerves, must suffer by so unexpected an event. But I pray and hope, that God will support him, and enable him still to go on with his Master's work. An accession of *spiritual* children, begotten in Christ Jesus by the gospel preached by him, will be his best relief and cordial under this heavy affliction; and in the prospect and hope of this, I trust he will persevere. God often calls his ministers to peculiar trials, that he may exhibit

(1) The death of his eldest son.

them as examples of patience, meekness, serenity, and even cheerfulness, and lead them to recommend and enforce their public exhortations thereby. It is good to have this in our thoughts in our afflicted seasons, and to do honour to our religion and profession, by a resemblance to our divine Master. To his assistance, compassion, and blessing I heartily commend him.

.
I am your affectionate friend,

JOB ORTON.

LETTER CCCLXXVII.

REV. JOB ORTON to the REV. THOMAS STEDMAN. Advantages of a country charge. Encouragement under a sense of ill-success. Best modes of reproving vice, and disarming opposition.

DEAR SIR,

March 27, 1773.

You have, I presume, had some account from Dr. Stonehouse, of his expedition into Kent, and of his reception there. He is now in London, and I suppose his time is very much taken up amidst the hurries, visits, and forms of the great city. I envy not his occasional residence there, much less the state of our brethren, who have parishes or congregations in London: for they have very little time to command; and, I fear, are so much taken up with avocations, too trifling in themselves, but, considering their situation, necessary to be attended to, that their minds are too much diverted from pastoral

duty, and the proper business of their important stations. The country parish-priests are much more happy, if they understand and love their work ; and have much more agreeable prospects of usefulness among the people committed to their care.

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I am sorry you meet with so much discouragement from your new parishioners. But, if you did not expect it, you were too sanguine, and did not sufficiently consider the state of that parish. It was, I suppose, like Solomon's field of the slothful, all overgrown with thorns and nettles, the fences broken down, or out of repair, and all the marks of negligence, and its bad consequences, appearing in it. Were you to take a farm in that condition, you would not expect to see it become fruitful and beautiful all at once, or with the utmost pains you could take in a few months, or even years. But the minds of sinners are more untractable than a neglected farm. The weeds of sin are so many, and have taken such deep root, that it is not easy to eradicate them, much less to destroy the seeds. It is hard to "break up the fallow ground" ⁽¹⁾ of hearts, which has been long uncultivated. But the hand of the diligent will in time do great things, and the blessing of the Lord, which will attend it, (if his diligence extends to prayer, as well as labour,) can break through the greatest difficulties. You will, no doubt, study some awful subjects, to awaken

(1) Hosea, x. 12.

and convince obstinate sinners; yet not dwell too much upon these, but try to draw them at times with the "cords of love," and the endearing, striking motives of a glorious gospel. When you hear of any of them behaving ill, you will take an opportunity of talking privately to them. But then, I think, it will be best not to enter too largely upon their particular sins and faults, (else they will probably be displeased,) but represent to them in general the evil of sin, the temporal, spiritual, and eternal misery, which men are bringing upon themselves and their children by vicious courses; and put into their hands some *little tract* against the vice which they are guilty of, or the whole or part of Dr. Stonehouse's Admonitions against Swearing, Sabbath-breaking, and Drunkenness. If you have any serious, judicious Christians in either of your parishes, who are acquainted with those persons who give you so much concern, endeavour to prevail upon them to talk a little seriously to them at proper times: for in many cases, a hint of advice given by one of the laity hath more effect, and is better received than when it comes from a clergyman; as they will think the latter is only acting *ex officio*, and that his exhortation doth not so much proceed from a real concern for their reformation and happiness. You will, I doubt not, consider that your case is the very case, in some degree, of every faithful minister of Jesus Christ. It was the case of the holy apostles, ⁽¹⁾ and was the case of their Lord and ours himself. And, though it

(1) 2 Cor. xii. 20, 21.

shows a right disposition, when a minister's heart is grieved and humbled in such circumstances, yet he should not be discouraged, but proceed with so much the more vigour in his work, comforting himself with this thought, that God may at length awaken the most careless, and humble the most obstinate sinners; or that something we say to them may stick by them, and produce some good effect hereafter, perhaps when we are removed to another station or another world; that others receive benefit by our labours, that all are not disobedient to the word and unfruitful under our ministry; and that we shall be a sweet savour to God, accepted and approved of him, "in them that perish, as well as in them that are saved;"⁽¹⁾ and that God will reward his ministers in proportion to their pains and diligence, and not their success. In the mean time, such events are of use to ministers themselves, to humble them, make them more watchful and zealous, and more earnest in prayer for all-conquering grace.

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I think I have now paid you in your own coin, and filled my paper to the utmost. If any thing be acceptable or useful to you in its contents, I shall be glad. I am thankful for your prayers, which are mutual. Think of me, as laid aside from public work, and almost useless; and learn from it to work while it is day, before disability comes, or the night when no man can work. And may God work effectually in you, with you, and by you!

I am your sincere and affectionate friend,

JOB ORTON.

(1) 2 Cor. ii. 15.

LETTER CCCLXXVIII.

REV. JOB ORTON to the REV. THOMAS STEDMAN. Various
useful hints.

DEAR SIR,

April 24, 1774.

I have long been so very weak and low, that I have had neither strength nor spirits to write any thing, but what was absolutely necessary. I bless God I am at present a little recruited. My spirits have been better, but my strength is still very small, and I am fearful of applying to any business, or even sitting down to write, lest it should throw me back again into weakness and nervous complaints. However, I must venture to send you a few lines, the confusion and interruption with which they are written may not make them less acceptable to you. My spirits have been greatly depressed, and a constant painful sensation in every nerve and fibre hath wasted my flesh, and filled my mind with sensations exquisitely more painful than those of the body. I thank God, I have this last week been more comfortable, have got some refreshing sleep, and am more easy and cheerful; though I still find myself very weak, and unfit for any active service, much less for any thing like study. I desire to be some way or other serving and glorifying God; but how this can be done in such circumstances as mine, at least by me, it is not easy to say. But Providence hath wise and gracious ends to answer by our afflictions, even those which in-

capacitate us for those services to which we are strongly inclined, and for which we have some proper qualifications. We are often, and indeed almost always, at a loss, when we set ourselves to judge of the reasons of the divine conduct. Our duty is submission; but that is not easy to be practised, nor can it be maintained, as it ought to be, without a *supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ*, which I wish may be more abundantly shed abroad into our hearts. You need it very much in your ministerial capacity; and, considering that station in which Providence hath fixed you, to quicken you to the duties of it, and to reconcile you to its inconveniences and disagreeable circumstances; which I should think would be easily borne by a good man, who hath health and spirits, and forms a just estimate of the worth of souls, the great business of life, and the duties of the ministerial office.

I wish Dr. Stonehouse's insertions in the newspapers, from my letters, may be of service to their readers. We do not know what good we do. A young physician of considerable reputation and fortune (Dr. Bostock) died lately at Liverpool of a violent fever. A little before his death, he told the minister who attended him, and who is a friend of mine, that he had received great and lasting benefit in his religious interests, by reading some letters of mine to my nephew, when they were fellow pupils together at the academy. I had no idea, that he or

any one else, had seen such letters. But I am thankful he did, since they were attended with such a happy effect.

I am truly concerned, that you have under your pastoral care any flagrantly disobedient to the laws of Christ. But, what minister *hath not such under his care?* There was a traitor in Christ's family. Young ministers are apt to set out with expectations raised *too high*, and expect *more* encouragement and success than they are ever likely to find. "*Old Adam* will be too hard for young Melancthon," as that venerable reformer complained, after he had been some time a preacher, and had great expectation from his zealous ministry.

I hope you will have some very comfortable and improving walks with the doctor and his family, during his residence at Cheverel; which you must set against many uncomfortable and dreary ones in the winter. I wish the doctor would ride on horseback every dry day, as I do. *Recipe caballum*, is his best prescription. Surely he might meet with some gentle, easy horse, no matter how ill-shaped and ugly, that might carry him safely about the fields of Cheverel. I remember an aged gouty minister who could not walk; and having a large garden, he used to ride often round it in a day upon an old steady horse, who used to count his rounds for him; and then, when he had completed them, would stop and proceed no further, though the rider tried every persuasive and pungent argument to excite him. I heartily wish and pray for his health and continued usefulness. Mr. B. —

is settled at Cam, within a mile of Dursley, in Gloucestershire ; which is, I imagine, about thirty miles from you. You must contrive to meet at some place equidistant ; and he says, he shall be very glad to see you.

Continue your good wishes and prayers for me : I want more clearness and satisfaction as to the great concern. My prayers are so broken, and attended with so much distraction and impertinence, that they are uncomfortable to myself, and can hardly be acceptable, even with all the gracious allowance of the gospel. But I do not love to trouble my friends with my complaints, any further than to desire and direct their petitions.

Yours affectionately,

JOB ORTON.

LETTER CCCLXXIX.

REV. JOB ORTON to REV. THOMAS STEDMAN. Excuses for not writing punctually. A troublesome choir at church. A valuable consolation in age. Useful hints.

DEAR SIR,

Jan. 14, 1775.

At this *season of the year*, it is usual for all wise and prudent people to settle their accounts, to pay their debts, and to leave none outstanding. But it is the unhappy case of some, who bear an honest mind, and are willing to be out of debt, not to be able to be so. This is at present, and is often, my own case, with regard to my epistolary correspondents.

Not for want of an honest mind, or a real affection to my friends, but through inability. I have long been a bankrupt in my health, and strength, and spirits, and must throw myself upon the compassion and kindness of my friends, to bear with me, and excuse me; and I hope they are, and will be willing, to accept of a composition, and to take a part of what I owe to their friendship in lieu of the whole. I have no reason to suppose, that you in particular will be an unmerciful creditor, and therefore must beg your acceptance of a small composition for two or three very friendly letters, for which I am indebted to you. It is so painful and injurious to me in general to write, and there are so few intervals, in which I can muster up a little strength and a few spirits to write to my friends, that I need great candour and indulgence from them. Nor is it so easy on other accounts to me to write as it was formerly: in all respects, *non sum qualis eram*. But I hope all my friends are endeavouring to resemble our common Father and Friend, who accepts according to what a man hath, and not according to what hath not; who considers our frame, and makes gracious allowances for our infirmities.

I am sorry for the trouble and vexation you have had, and are likely to have, with your *eccentric singers*. They are in general conceited, troublesome fellows, and have no more religion than an organ or a fiddle. And I wish the doctor, when he comes to you, may be able to bring them to

order. But steadiness, and not yielding to them, is the only way to humble them.

Tu ne cede malis; sed contra audentior ito. I would propose in the mean time, that you talk calmly and seriously to them *separately*, and endeavour to give them better notions than they have, of the *nature* and *design* of *psalmody*, and particularly urge upon their consciences a reverence *for the presence of God*; and how *affronting* it must be to him to have the church turned into a *theatre*, and divine worship into a *farce*. I know nothing more likely to shame and reform them.

I can read very little these short dark days, but I sometimes entertain myself with some of my good old authors.

— I am thankful that I was led in *early* life to read so much *practical* divinity, and the lives and histories of *good* men; as I can *remember* what I then read, better than what I read yesterday; which is the case with most *old* people, especially if they have bodily diseases added to the natural decays of age. I have fewer and shorter intervals of what may be called ease than usual, and must expect them to grow shorter. I am a wonder to myself, that I have lived to see the *beginning* of *another* year. I cannot expect to see the *end* of it. May I employ the poor remains of life as well as possible! I wish my infirmities may suggest *hints* of *caution* to my younger brethren and friends, to apply diligently to their Master's work, to be frugal of

their *time*; and frugal of their *money*, as age and prior infirmities may render them incapable of doing good, or filling up stations in which they might be comfortably supported. And the state of the world *at present* is such, that nothing can be more disagreeable and painful, than to be in circumstances of necessity and dependence, when every comfortable circumstance and accommodation is so desirable to lighten the burdens of life. Loss of time, and neglect of opportunities of usefulness, often oppress my spirits. Spending too much time about *trifling* books and studies, the contents and subjects of which I could wish entirely to have *blotted from my memory*, is a very painful circumstance. I mention what gives me uneasiness, that you may now avoid the like, and employ your health and money, your time and abilities, so as to leave no room for *painful* reflections hereafter. May God prolong your life, as much as his glory, and your own usefulness and comfort may render desirable; and may the *close of it* have no bitter remorse, no uneasy sensations attending it! Continue your prayers for me, and believe me to be, dear sir,

Your sincere and affectionate friend,
and faithful servant,
JOB. ORTON.

LETTER CCCLXXX.

REV. JOB ORTON to REV. THOMAS STEDMAN. What familiar letters ought to be. On what day Sermons should not be made, &c. &c.

DEAR SIR,

January, 1779.

Being confined to-day by great rain, I know not how to employ my time better than in writing a letter to you; though whether I shall be able to finish it to-day in time for the post I know not: however, I will do something towards it.

I am always glad to receive *chit-chat letters*, as they seem to come from the heart. Mr. Pope is I think right, who somewhere says, "The letters of friends are not worse for being fit for none else to read. The effusion of a moment ought to be the characteristic of all familiar writing. It is a strange recommendation, but a true one." In this view, I had rather write twenty letters to a friend with whom I can be free, than one to a person every way as good and valuable, and with whom I can be equally free, who is at the same time formal and accurate himself, and expects the letters of his correspondents to be so too. I do not love to write letters where compliments and apologies are necessary. Every thing that comes directly from the heart, and seems like conversation, is most agreeable to me. And, indeed, what is writing letters but a kind of conversation? and therefore ought to be easy, free and unreserved. Per-

haps I am selfish in this sentiment, as I can seldom write more than a few lines at a time without being tired and in pain, and forced to lie down upon my couch; so that method and order must be neglected by me; but these I think should be easily excused in letters, especially where the writer's heart and his esteem for his correspondent appear at first view, without any labour or study.

I will excuse your having a sermon to write on the Saturday, because the occasion of it was urgent and necessary; else I shall blame you, if ever you have a sermon to make on a Saturday. Dr. Donne (as it is observed in his life) always chose his text, for the next Lord's-day, on the preceding Sunday evening, when he had finished the duty of that day. This was *my* method. I always contrived to have Saturday, as a kind of leisure day, to attend at the infirmary at Shrewsbury, or to do other business, which (being market-day) it occasioned; and that I might, by exercise and relaxation, get myself into better spirits for the labours of the Sabbath: only on a Saturday evening, I carefully reviewed my sermon, and committed the most striking parts of it, especially in the application, to memory. And I always spent my Saturday evenings at home, that I might prepare myself the better for the business of the following day.

I heartily wish you the return of many happy *birth-days*; and that each of them may afford you increasing pleasure in your own improvement, and the advancement of religion by your ministry. I have no doubt but you spent the day *religiously*;

in thankfully acknowledging the goodness and mercy of God to you; in acts of humiliation for the vanity of childhood and youth; and in forming good resolutions for greater seriousness, diligence, and activity, as a Christian and minister. May God hear your prayers, accept your praises, and multiply his blessings upon you!

I am now reading Michaelis's "Introductory Lectures to the sacred Books of the New Testament," a small octavo volume, price three shillings. It is a good concise account of critics, commentators, and their sentiments on the genuineness authority, and inspiration of the books of the New Testament. It will refresh your memory with many things on these subjects; but he doth not enter deeply into the controversies of them.

I have lately bought a Scotch edition of Flavel's works, in eight volumes octavo. The folio edition I had before; but this I can read as I lie in my couch, or as I sit in my chair, smoking my evening's pipe. I have read more of Flavel, since I was able to read at all, than any other writer; and though he is by no means judicious, yet there is an amazing tenderness, and soft pathos in his style and manner; and I am always pleased with his plainness, simplicity, great seriousness and entertaining stories.

I am concerned that Mr. * * * doth not apply more diligently to his studies; and it really grieves me to see young divines, who have good natural abilities, and have enjoyed considerable advantages in their education, contented to *glimmer*;

when, with more application, they might be burning and shining lights in the church, and the distinguished ornaments of Christianity and their profession. I sometimes talk freely to my younger brethren on such topics; but in this age, young men do not, in general, choose to attend to the most friendly advice of their seniors; though delivered, not only tenderly, but respectfully. They are wiser, and have better ideas of divinity, especially, than those who have grown grey in study and in the ministry.

I think I have now written every thing I had to say to you—which has been done at many sittings—and I considered myself as talking with you.—But this wet day makes me uncomfortable, and my letter is as dull as the day; yet fair or foul, bright or dull, I am,

Your faithful and affectionate,

JOB ORTON.

P. S. Look over the next letter with which you favour me; for the last was written in haste, and there were some words in it which I could not read. Let it be a rule with you, always to read over a letter before you seal it, correct whatever is wrong, make proper stops, that your correspondents may be at no loss to understand your meaning at once. This is one of Lord Chesterfield's advices to his Son; and if he had given him no worse, it would have been well.

LETTER CCCLXXXI.

REV. DR. STONEHOUSE to REV. THOMAS STEDMAN. Antidotes to the love of popularity. A worthy rector. A contented old age. Manner of Hervey as a preacher.

DEAR SIR,

March 17, 1772.

I am indebted to you for two letters, which I will answer (according to my usual way) paragraph by paragraph, and then nothing is omitted.

You say popularity is a great snare. I have *found* it so; especially the two or three first years after I commenced preacher. I can now *almost* say *in reality*, what Pope only *affected* to say,

“Now sick alike of envy and applause.”

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“Blest rules of cool prudential age!”

says Dr. Cotton. I have now many thoughts in the pulpit to damp ambition, and the thirst of popular applause. I am failing in my memory, my voice is tremulous, my once animated eye, now waters, on the least attempt to strike by my look, my spirits flag, &c. I have also seen *such changes* in my hearers. How many of my admirers have forsaken me! How often have my most undeserved productions been *extolled*, and my most judicious performances passed unnoticed! How few are judges! How little good has been done by those discourses I have taken so much pains with, and from which I promised myself so much!

I *once* went into the pulpit sanguine with hope : I *now* go up as an *act of duty* in the sight of God, and because my friends advise me to preach. You must keep a tight rein over yourself, and consider ministers are only instruments, and the blessing is God's. A proper emulation is laudable. Popularity becomes a snare, when we grow proud, conceited, and behave accordingly, attributing all to *self*, unmindful of the grace and blessing of God ; and regarding *our own* reputation only, without being desirous of his glory, and the salvation of our fellow-creatures. I daily pray for God's grace to strengthen and succeed your endeavours, and it is my greatest pleasure to hear of your success.

I bless God from my heart, that your ministry is so well attended. This will be an encouragement to you ; and I tell you before I come to Cheverel, I shall preach but little while I am there, as my sermons in general are not calculated for that people. They are dissatisfactory to myself ; and I cannot at my time of life be composing afresh in a different way. Doing good should be the great end of preaching ; and *your* discourses are much better calculated for that purpose in *that* place, than mine are. *My* sermons are calculated for great towns, yours for country villages and plain people. But even *here* I erase every hard word, and if such escape me I alter them. My great end in coming to Cheverel this year, will be, not *to preach* myself much, but to confirm and strengthen *your* preaching ; to converse with the

people, encouraging some, and admonishing others I am glad to hear so good an account of * * * ; but till people *pray* from principle, there can be no work of grace begun in them.

I do not care who has the living of * * * , so I *have it not*. I have received a letter from Lord * * * , of which I send you a copy *verbatim*; by which you will see, he *could* have procured it for me. Never, no never, will I undertake the care of so large a parish, in so populous a city. You see the cork-cutter at Salisbury says, on hearing me at the cathedral there, “ I am not the man I was.” Nor am I. My strength and voice fail me, and my infirmities increase daily. I have been *very happy* here for nine years; and have *no fatigue* at a time of life when I require rest. Happy in my family, and nothing to do, but to preach once or twice a week, and to pray God to prepare me for bidding a final adieu to the world: whereas, had I gone to * * * I should have been rushing into the world afresh, and on a very uncompromising stage of action, *Me sylva, cævusque, tutus ab insidiis*, &c.

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As to your enquiry concerning Mr. Hervey’s manner of preaching, I recollect that he preached without notes; excepting, that he had before him a small morsel of paper, on which were written in short hand, the general heads and particulars of his sermon; which sometimes he looked at and sometimes not. He was very regular in his plans;

nor was he very long: from thirty to forty minutes was his usual time, *rarely* longer.

Yours sincerely,

J. S.

LETTER CCCLXXXII.

REV. DR. STONEHOUSE to REV. THOMAS STEDMAN.—Letter of counsel from a rector to his curate.

DEAR SIR,

August 27, 1772.

I never overlook your margins, either at the top or bottom of your letters. But why dont you use a larger sized paper?

I am heartily glad to hear that your audiences keep up; and still more so, that you go from house to house, and *meet with much respect and affection*. Indeed, Mr. * * *, who was here lately, told me you were much beloved by all the people. Let this counterbalance that thorn in your flesh * * *. Nothing like *visiting the parishioners* with a view to *their religious concerns*, where such *visits* are acceptable.—You did well in lending Mrs. * * * Orton “On Eternity.” If she objects to what you say in order to convince her of the corruption of her nature, and errors of her past life, refer her to passages in the *liturgy* and the *Scriptures*, and endeavour to get her to *pray*, that she *may* have her eyes opened to see the evil and danger of sin. Such passages from the liturgy, as “there is *no health* in

us. Have mercy upon us *miserable* offenders! O God the Father of heaven, have mercy upon us miserable sinners!" And from the Scriptures—"Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord; for in *thy* sight shall no man *living* be justified. Create in me a *clean* heart, O God; and renew a *right* spirit within me." She cannot say these are your words; and *comment* on such passages. Show her the *extent* and *spirituality* of the divine commands, according to Christ's *own* comment in the fifth chapter of Matthew. But I hardly expect you will do *her* any good. Old trees will not bend; young twigs may be formed to your purposes.

As to the affair you speak of—my well-weighed advice is, to take *no notice* of such affronts. Leave *that* to others. *Remember*, and *imitate* Dean Tucker's conduct at a violent election at B——. His parish told him if he voted against the *restry*, they would not collect him a shilling; his *answer* was noble, and spoken very calmly,—“Gentlemen, do whatever is right in your own eyes. I shall certainly vote for Lord C——., consequently against you. And I shall certainly do my duty to you, as your *minister*, whether you collect for me or not. If you can answer that in your own consciences, I am satisfied. Sure I am, *my* conscience shall never reproach me for my conduct towards *you*, and I should be very sorry (for your own sakes) that *yours* should ever reproach you for your conduct towards *me*.”—This manly, honest, and disinterested behaviour so *awed* and overcame them, that his collection never lessened. Go on doing your

duty as you have begun, and leave the rest to providence. "When a man's ways please the Lord, he often makes (unexpectedly makes) even his enemies to be at peace with him." ⁽¹⁾ If you appear *hurt*, * * * triumphs. If you *court* his favour, he grows more insolent. Be barely civil : seem to know nothing : and keep yourself to yourself.

The following is a short prayer I sometimes make use of.—"Let us ever be prepared to bear any disappointments we may meet with in our *expectations* and *endeavours*, with such a temper, as becometh those who believe in Thee, and who regard thy hand in all things; submitting without murmuring to thy holy will; and accounting what thou art pleased to appoint the fittest and best for us. And while we make it our *study* to do our duty with *sincerity* and *diligence*, let us ever with peaceful minds, and full resignation, leave all *issues* and *events* to *thy* disposal." Meditate on the text you mention. "Be satisfied from yourself." ⁽²⁾

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God blesses the use of six means, namely, prayer, reading the Scriptures, meditation, examination, spiritual conversation, and public worship. You know not what good you may do even after you are dead, by your preaching and conversation. I have reaped benefit this year from things, which Dr. Doddridge said to me thirty years ago; which have lately come to my mind with the strongest conviction of their propriety and usefulness. No man

(1) Prov. xvi. 7.

(2) Prov. xiv. 14.

knows which of his sermons will, or will not do good. It is his business to preach ; preaching being a divine ordinance. What the world says or thinks, is (and ought to be in a minister's esteem) of no consequence. He is to go on doing his duty.

I know such enthusiasts as * * * set prudence at defiance, calling it (as one of them has done) " a rascally virtue." No matter for that. A Christian minister without it, ill deserves the name of a Christian minister ; and is a bad imitator of his blessed Master, whose every word was *prudent*. See all his answers to the ensnaring questions of his enemies. I am an *open* man ; I never *hint* a fault, or *hesitate* a dislike, but come to the point *openly* as a *true friend*. If a man says painful and disagreeable things to you, depend on it he is your friend ; else he would prophesy smooth things, and not care what became of you. . . .

If you have any remaining doubts, consult your "*fidus Achates*," Mr. Orton, on the business, who is a wise man, and your steady friend.—But enough of this.

Archbishop Tillotson was an excellent man. He gave away the whole of his revenue (exclusive of his necessary expenses) in charity, and died so poor, as to leave his widow only the profits arising from the sale of his sermons to subsist on ; in which he was blameable. She *should have been* provided for by the Archbishop. . . .

I want to be in the Cheverel *nest*. You have *too little* company : *we* too much. Such is this life ! the happy mediocrity is scarcely any where, or in

any thing to be found. Remember us kindly to your sister. I chide you sometimes; but it is in love. "*Ubi multa nitent*," &c. I commend you both to the blessing, guidance, and protection of the Almighty, and

I am,

Your's sincerely,

J. S.

LETTER CCCLXXXIII.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. to the REV. JOHN NEWTON.
Beautiful remarks on pulpit style. Simplicity distinguished from vulgarity.

May 5, 1783.

You may suppose that I did not hear Mr. * * * preach, but I heard of him. How different is that plainness of speech, which a spiritual theme requires, from that vulgar dialect which this gentleman has mistaken for it! Affectation of every sort is odious, especially in a minister, and more especially an affectation that betrays him into expressions fit only for the mouths of the illiterate. Truth indeed needs no ornament, neither does a beautiful person; but to clothe it therefore in rags, when a decent habit was at hand, would be esteemed preposterous and absurd. The best proportioned figure may be made offensive by beggary and filth; and even truths, which came down from heaven,

though they cannot forego their nature, may be disguised and disgraced by unsuitable language. It is strange that a pupil of yours should blunder thus. You may be consoled, however, by reflecting, that he could not have erred so grossly, if he had not totally and wilfully departed both from your instruction and example. Were I to describe your style in two words, I should call it plain and neat, *simplicem munditiis*, and I do not know how I could give it juster praise, or pay it a greater compliment. He that speaks to be understood by a congregation of rustics, and yet in terms that would not offend academical ears, has found the happy medium. This is certainly practicable to men of taste and judgment, and the practice of a few proves it. *Hactenus de Concionando.*

We are truly glad to hear that Miss C—— is better, and heartily wish you more promising accounts from Scotland. *Debemur morti nos nostraque.* We all acknowledge the debt, but are seldom pleased when those we love are required to pay it. The demand will find you prepared for it.

Yours, my dear friend,

W. C.

LETTER CCCLXXXIV.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. to REV. JOHN NEWTON. “No man *scolded* out of his sins.” Tenderness necessary in a minister.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

June 17, 1783.

Your letter reached Mr. S—— while Mr. —— was with him: whether it wrought any change in his opinion of that gentleman as a preacher, I know not, but for my own part I give you full credit for the soundness and rectitude of yours. No man was ever scolded out of his sins. The heart, corrupt as it is, and because it is so, grows angry if it be not treated with some management and good manners, and scolds again. A surly mastiff will bear, perhaps, to be stroked, though he will growl even under that operation, but if you touch him roughly, he will bite. There is no grace that the spirit of self can counterfeit with more success than a religious zeal. A man thinks he is fighting for Christ, and he is fighting for his own notions. He thinks that he is skilfully searching the hearts of others, when he is only gratifying the malignity of his own, and charitably supposes his hearers destitute of all grace, that he may shine the more in his own eyes by comparison. When he has performed this notable task, he wonders that they are not converted: “he has given it them soundly, and if they do not tremble, and confess that God is in him of a truth, he gives them up as reprobate,

incorrigible, and lost for ever." But a man that loves me, if he sees me in an error, will pity me, and endeavour calmly to convince me of it, and persuade me to forsake it. If he has great and good news to tell me, he will not do it angrily, and in much heat and discomposure of spirit. It is not, therefore, easy to conceive on what ground a minister can justify a conduct which only proves that he does not understand his errand. The absurdity of it would certainly strike him, if he were not himself deluded.

A people will always love a minister, if a minister seems to love his people. The old maxim, *Simile agit in simile*, is in no case more exactly verified: therefore you were beloved at Olney, and if you preached to the Chicksaws, and Chachtaws, would be equally beloved by them.

W. C.

LETTER CCCLXXXV.

REV. CLAUDIUS BUCHANAN to the REV. DR. BROWNE.

MY DEAR SIR,

Calcutta, Nov. 29, 1801.

I received your letter last night. I envy much the zealous affection which animates your mind, and would gladly go up to Chandernagore also, to obtain the same. Old Mr. Newton when in the country used to think that London was Sardis; but when he came up to town, he found there a great

assembly walking in white ; and so he joined them. I have thought more seriously in Calcutta than ever I did at Barrackpore. But what I have been (at any period of my life) is so little like what I would wish to be, that I cannot contemplate it without remorse. I do not know that I ever had what Christians call "zeal." I recollect that I expected it would grow, when I entered the ministry ; but I had scarcely entered the ministry, and preached a few times, when I was sent to this country.

I never knew, as you do, what it was to preach profitably and zealously for a season. That is a work I have to begin ; and how to begin it I know not. I need an unction from on high, which I anxiously look for ; and yet in looking for this, I look for that which I never knew, as most have known it.

One thing urges me sometimes to press forward with hope ; and that is, that all I hear, and all I say appears to me so very unlike what it ought to be, that I imagine something better might be attempted. And yet were the Spirit indeed to descend, we cannot expect that God, who worketh by natural means, should suddenly add the eloquent mouth, and new powers of memory and understanding. The holy skill of preaching appears to be the fruit of long experience and converse among God's people. And in Calcutta, as in every other place, the able minister of the New Testament, can only be made, by nightly and wakeful meditation, patient study, and prayer producing self-denial.

It appears to me that it was never intended that

the gospel should flourish in the heart and mouth of any minister, who did not make it the "one thing," the sole point of heartfelt recurrence. But when it is made so, I can easily conceive how the tender plant grows a great tree with spreading branches and refreshing fruit. Then, no doubt, even a mind naturally barren bears exuberant ideas, and is constantly forming lively images; and, though the mouth be rude in speech, the full heart becomes vocal, and utters the word "in season."

Whether either of us will be able thus to make the gospel the "one thing," time will show. "He that warreth," ought not to "entangle himself with the affairs of this life." But do we *war*? Time enough for the soldier to disencumber himself when he begins to fight. It is easy to throw off a college; but it is very difficult to take up the church. But when the church spirit appears, it will soon conquer the college.

The grand question is, ought not *means* to be used to mature that spirit which we desire? We read "that a good soldier of Jesus Christ entangleth himself not with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier; or, as Guyse explains it, "he must not follow any civil calling, unprofitable reading, or unnecessary relaxation to entangle his thoughts, and swallow up his time;" superintending a college is a civil calling. Latin and Greek is unprofitable reading, and lying in bed after five in the morning is unnecessary relaxation; "but his whole time,

words, thoughts, and actions must be employed, like a soldier's, on his calling, that he may please Him who hath chosen and authorized him to fight."

How far, in what manner and in what particulars, St. Paul would obey the spirit of this passage, were he in your situation or mine, I really cannot tell. Were he here, he would be *warring*. After *we* have warred for some time, we also shall know. "O that I knew the will of God in this matter," saith Augustine: "but I am not worthy to know his will. This ignorance is the fruit of my backsliding."

One thing seems probable, that no *sudden* success will appear from any sudden change of our style of address, or manner of preaching. It arises usually from the impression of private character and manner of life. Private character alone will confirm the public sermon. The holy life of the minister is the good alterative among men.

As to myself, it is my only desire to be of some service to the church of Christ before I die; and I would gladly seize any means, by change of situation or otherwise, which would enable me to do so. As to this world, there is no object (if I know my own heart at all) which I have in view; neither of family, of fortune, of situation, of leaving this country, or continuing in it. I have chiefly to complain of a languid and heartless constitution, both in body and mind, which makes me to bear easily with all things, and to have little pleasure in any thing. This loss of energy and life has been

occasioned partly by a continued course of ill health, partly by the untoward circumstances in my situation since I arrived in the country, but chiefly by the natural contagion of unchristian manners.

I am, however, at this time more independent of society I dislike, than at any former period since my arrival in India; and I hope to be yet more so. Whether by resigning college appointments, secluding myself from the world, and preaching twice a week, I should be of more service than by maintaining a public situation, is a question I cannot answer. What may be impossible and improper now, may be possible and proper hereafter.

However, the chief consideration at present is the state of the heart. How is the soul with God? I endeavour, by prayer, to restore it daily, relying (though feebly) on the aid of the Mediator, wondering sometimes that I am not worse, oppressed in spirit at a review of the past, and hoping for better days.

I shall ever be ready to accede to any plan you can suggest, for the furtherance of our ministry. You say you "long to launch out into the fulness of Christ." So do I. But these words are too apostolic for me at present. In order to launch forth like * * *, I should need not only a new effusion of the Holy Spirit, but those natural abilities which generally accompany such an effusion, in order to make it useful. Circumstances seem to admonish me, that the "still small voice," and not "the rushing mighty wind," is my province in the

gospel. What another school than Calcutta would have produced, I know not. But I shall be blessed if grace be given unto me to do what good I can, consistently and steadily in my various situations. Unhappily, collegiate avocations usurp much of my time. But let us beware of repining at the necessity of spending time in this way, till we become *confident*, that were all our time at our own disposal, we should spend it in a better.

I earnestly pray that we may both be rightly directed in our labours in this vineyard; that we may see some fruit in others, and enjoy the comfort ourselves of faithful ministers of the gospel. I think better days are at hand. In this hope,

I remain, my dear Sir,

Very affectionately yours,

C. BUCHANAN.

LETTER CCCLXXXVI.

ALEXANDER KNOX, Esq. to the REV. JOHN JEBB, (afterwards Bishop of Limerick.) Some admirable observations in reply to his correspondent's question, "What Christian preaching should be?"

MY DEAR MR. JEBB,

Shrewsbury, Jan. 25, 1801.

I thank you much for your last letter: I sat down to answer it several days ago; but I began, on a larger scale, than I was able to accomplish: I must, therefore, be content to take in my sails; not, as is

customary, because there is too much wind,—but, because there is not enough to fill them.

. . . . True religion is happily contagious : and, I am sure, it owed its rapid progress, in the early ages of the church, infinitely more to the divine infection, (if I may use such an expression,) that attended the spirit of the apostles, than to the demonstrative evidence of their miracles. I believe there never yet was a really good man, I mean, a zealous, decided Christian, whose lively expression of his own feelings did not, more or less, reach the hearts of those who heard him.

And this, in some degree, answers your question, “What Christian preaching should be?” At least, it points out an indispensable pre-requisite : Christian preaching can arise, only, from a Christian mind and heart. This is the great want in the preaching of to-day : there is no spirit in it. It is the result of a kind of intellectual pumping ; there is no gushing from the spring. Our Saviour, speaking to the woman of Samaria, of the happiness which his religion would bring into the bosoms of those who cordially embraced it, elegantly and expressively represents it, by a well of water in the breast, “springing up into everlasting life.” Where this is in a minister, it will spring out, as well as spring up : and it will be felt to be living water from the pleasure and refreshment which it conveys, almost even to minds hitherto unaccustomed to such communications.

What Horace says, is quite in point :—

Non satis est pulchra esse poemata, dulcia sunt :

Et, quocunque volunt animum auditoris agunto.
 Ut ridentibus arrident, ita flentibus adsunt
 Humani vultus. Si vis me flere, dolendum est
 Primum ipsi tibi; tunc tua me infortunia lædent :

the Pulchra is all that a man who does not himself feel can attain to: the Dulcia is the offspring of an impressed and interested heart. But, if such effects were to be produced by the mere feeling exhibition of human distress, what may not be looked for from divine truths?—interesting to the hearer, no less than to the speaker; and interesting, beyond all that can be conceived, to every natural sentiment of man,—when done justice to, in the same way that Horace here demands for the drama.

A witty poet has well said,—

The specious sermons of a worldly man,
 Are little more than flashes in the pan :
 The mere haranguing upon what men call
 Morality, is powder without ball :
 But he, who preaches with a Christian grace,
 Fires at our vices, and the shot takes place.

But you also ask, “ what do I conceive to be the mean, between cold morality, and wild enthusiasm ?” To this, I answer, that the mean between all extremes is Christianity, as given in the New Testament. An attention to the exhibition of Christ’s religion, as taught, by himself; as exemplified in the Acts of the Apostles; and as expanded and ramified in the Epistles, particularly of Saint Paul,—is the best and only preservative against coldness, against fanaticism, and against superstition. But, let me tell you, that this simple

direct view of Christianity, has very seldom been taken. Most men, in all ages, have sat down to the gospel, with a set of prejudices, which, like so many inquisitors, have laid the Christian religion on a bed like that of Procrustes; and, as it suited them, either mutilated it by violence, or extended it by force.

I agree, however, with Mrs. Chapone, in her ingenious essay on the subject, that coldness is a far more dangerous extreme than overmuch heat. The one may consist with real goodness; nay, may be the consequence of real goodness, commixing with a perturbed imagination, or an ill-formed judgment. But coldness can be resolved, only, into an absolute want of feeling. Enthusiasm is excess, but coldness is want of vitality. The enthusiast, in a moral view, is insane; which implies the possibility of recovery, and, perhaps, a partial or occasional recurrence of reason. The cold person is like the idiot, where reason never shows itself, and where convalescence is desperate.

But, let it ever be remembered, that he who has really found the mean between the two extremes, will, and must be reckoned enthusiastic, by those who are in the extreme of coldness. You can easily conceive, that, when any one stands on a middle point, between two others, who are, with respect to him, strictly equidistant, he must, from the inevitable laws of perspective, appear to both, not to be in the middle, but comparatively near the opposite party. He therefore,

Auream quisquis mediocritatem
Diligit,

must make up his mind, to be censured on both sides: by the enthusiast, as cold; by those who are really cold, as an enthusiast.

This, however, is a digression. I return to the New Testament view of Christianity.

Now this, I repeat, (for the reasons above given,) is most surely to be sought in the New Testament itself. And the representation given of Christianity there, differs, in my mind, from that given, in most pulpits, in very many, and very important instances. I shall notice two instances particularly:—

I. Christianity is represented, in most pulpits, rather as a scheme of external conduct, than as an inward principle of moral happiness, and moral rectitude.

In modern sermons you get a great many admonitions and directions, as to right conduct: but what David asked for so earnestly is seldom touched upon,—“Create in me a clean heart, O God! and renew a right spirit within me.” Now, the New Testament dwells on this, as its main object: “Make the tree good,” says Christ, “and its fruit will also be good:”—“Except ye be converted, and become as little children, you can in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

These expressions evidently imply, that, in order to be Christians, persons must undergo a moral change; that Christianity is designed to make them something which they are not by nature; and that the alteration produced in the mind, the affections, and the conduct, by a right and full ac-

quiescence in the gospel, is so radical, so striking, and so efficacious, as to warrant the strongest imagery, in order to do it justice, that language can furnish.

“Except a man,” says our Lord, “be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”—“If any man,” says Saint Paul, “be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.”—“If ye, then, be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above: for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.” And, to quote but one passage more from Saint Paul, “They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh, with the affections and desires.”

Now, what, I ask, do these expressions imply? After every fair allowance for figure and metaphor, do they not convey a far deeper and more mysterious view of Christianity, than is commonly adverted to? Some divines, I know, endeavour to explain these, and similar passages, as if they referred, rather to a relative and extrinsic, than to a real and internal change; as if they meant merely proselytism from heathenism to Christianity, and initiation into outward church privileges. But this miserable mode of interpretation is flatly inconsistent with the whole tenor of the New Testament. It is not heathenism, but moral evil, which is here pointed out as the grand source of human misery:

and the aptitude of the gospel, to overcome and extirpate this moral evil, is what is dwelt upon as its great and leading excellence. These, therefore, and all similar passages, must be understood in a moral sense: and, when so understood, how deep is their import! To suppose that there is not a strict appositiveness in these figurative expressions, would be to accuse the apostles, and Christ himself, of bombastic amplification: but, if they have been thus applied, because no other ones were adequate, to do justice to the subject, I say again, what a view do they give of Christianity!

It may be said, that enthusiasts have abused these expressions. True: but what then? What gift of God has not been abused? And the richest gifts most grossly? Meanwhile, the Scriptures remain unadulterated; and, abused as they may have been, by perverse misrepresentation, on the one side, or on the other, we have no right to go to any other standard.

With these passages of Scripture, then, and many similar ones,—nay, with the whole tenor of the New Testament, in my view, I hesitate not to say, that Christian preaching consists, first, in representing man to be, by nature, (I mean in his present fallen state,) a weak, ignorant, sinful, and, of course, miserable being; as such, to be liable to God's displeasure; and to be absolutely incapable of enjoying any real happiness, either here or hereafter. The passages of Scripture which prove this are innumerable: I shall give but a few. "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and

sins. The carnal mind is enmity against God. The carnal man knoweth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them; because they are spiritually discerned. They that are in the flesh, cannot please God. Having the understanding darkened; being alienated from the life of God."

Nor are we to suppose that these texts speak only of the grossly wicked. Saint Paul repeatedly explains such statements to belong to all mankind, until they are brought to repentance, and are inwardly, as well as outwardly, changed by divine grace. And, in fact, our own experience confirms the truth of this. For, if we look around us, whom do we see either truly good or truly happy? Some there are, unquestionably; though, too generally, in a very low and imperfect degree. But how rarely do we discover what Saint Paul calls, "the fruit of the spirit,—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Yet, surely, the possession of these tempers is just as essential to Christianity now, as it was in the days of Saint Paul: now, as well as then, it is an immutable truth, that, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

To show, then, strongly and feelingly the misery not only of sinful actions, but of that carnal, worldly, indevout, unfeeling state of mind, in which most men are content to live; and to point out the absolute necessity of a change from that state, into an humble, watchful, spiritual, devout, filial frame of mind, is, in my opinion, the very foundation of all

Christian preaching ; as it is, in truth, the key-stone of Christianity.

The very word for repentance, points out the reality and depth of this change ; *μετανοια* “ a transformation of mind.” And our Lord’s words to Saint Paul, clearly explain wherein that change, that *μετανοια* consists : “ To open their eyes ; to turn them from darkness to light ; and from the power of Satan unto God :” that is, to enlighten them with a divine and saving knowledge of what is true and good ; to fill their hearts with the love of it ; and to furnish them with the power to perform it. The blessings consequent upon this change immediately follow : “ That they may receive forgiveness of sins ; and an inheritance among them that are sanctified, through faith, that is in me.”

Christianity, then, in this view, is really what Saint Paul’s calls it,—“the power of God unto salvation.” When thus pursued, I mean, when a deep sense of inward depravity and weakness excites a man to seek divine knowledge, and divine grace, in order to the enlightening of his mind, and the renewing of his heart ; when this view produces conscientious watchfulness, excites to fervent habitual devotion, and presents to the mind, in a new light, God’s inestimable love, in the redemption of the world by his Son ; then, by degrees, sometimes more rapidly, sometimes more slowly, the true Christian character begins to form itself in the mind. Then the great things spoken of Christianity, in the New Testament, begin to be understood, because they begin to be felt. The vanity of earthly

things becomes more and more apparent : that divine faith which gives victory over the world begins to operate : religious duties, once burthensome, become delightful ; self-government becomes natural and easy ; reverential love to God, and gratitude to the Redeemer, producing humility, meekness, active, unbounded benevolence, grow into habitual principles ; private prayer is cultivated not merely as a duty, but as the most delightful exercise of the mind ; cheerfulness reigns within, and diffuses its sweet influence over the whole conversation and conduct ; all the innocent natural enjoyments of life, (scarcely, perhaps, tasted before, from the natural relish of the mind being blunted by artificial pleasures,) become inexhaustible sources of comfort ; and the close of life is contemplated as the end of all pain, and the commencement of perfect everlasting felicity.

This, then, I conceive is a faint sketch of that state of mind to which the Christian preacher should labour to bring himself and his hearers. 'This I take to be "true religion ;" our Saviour's "well of water, springing up into everlasting life ;" Saint Paul's "new creature," and "spiritual mind ;" and Saint John's "fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

These points, therefore, I take to be the great features of Christian preaching :—

1. The danger and misery of an unrenewed, unregenerate state ; whether it be of the more gross, or of the more decent kind.

2. The absolute necessity of an inward change: a moral transformation of mind and spirit.

3. The important and happy effects which take place when this change is really produced.

But how little justice have I done the subject! what a meagre outline have I given you! But if it sets you on thinking for yourself, and leads you, like the Bereans, to search the Scriptures, "whether these things be so," it is the utmost I can look for.

LETTER CCCLXXXVII.

REV. JOHN JEBB to ALEXANDER KNOX, Esq.—The advantages of a small charge; especially with reference to more extensive ultimate usefulness.

MY DEAR SIR,

Cashel, Jan. 24, 1804.

I this morning wrote a longer letter, which I intended for you; but which, through inadvertence, I suffered to take fire, while I was in the act of sealing it. And, therefore, I have now my labour to begin again. If there be any thing like local influence, I fear my epistle will not be mended: this morning I wrote in the old and precious library; ⁽¹⁾ now, I am in my bed-chamber, not entirely undisturbed by the noise of carpenters, putting up book-shelves in my sitting-room. However, I feel sincere pleasure in the conviction, that, when I wrote in the

⁽¹⁾ The diocesan library at Cashel.

morning, it was not under the influence of a mere transient April gleam of mental sunshine. I then said, "I will candidly own to you, that, at my first coming down here, my spirits were low. But, God be thanked, I have not found myself in a more cheerful frame of mind, for many months, than I am at this moment. And it is pleasant that this change is produced, not in society, nor in consequence of any thing worldly, but in the midst of good old books; partly, I believe, through their influence, and primarily, I humbly hope, through the influence of a far higher agency." What I then wrote, I am happy to give you, as my present feeling: join with me, my good friend, in humble prayers, that it may be permanent. I find myself called to the care of a small but uninstructed flock; and, therefore, I hope that when I am settled I shall find a sufficiency of active employment. The number of my parishioners is so limited, that I hope to see almost every family every week; and their present ignorance, I have every reason to imagine, so great, that there will be a field for exertion among them. I rejoice that my situation is such as to exclude all temptations to public display; and, consequently, I trust, most of the danger of seeking popular commendation. I conceive it peculiarly fortunate, that, by a decent management of time, in my present limited sphere, I shall have much leisure to prepare for a more extensive one; should providence ever be pleased to call me to it. I feel, and I apply, the sage observation of Bishop Hall now before me. "It is commonly seen, that

boldness puts men forth before their time, before their ability. Wherein we have seen many, that (like lapwings and partridges) have run away, with some part of their shell upon their heads. Whence, it follows, that, as they began boldly, so they proceed unprofitably, and conclude, not without shame. I would rather be haled, by force of others, to great duties, than rush upon them unbidden. It were better a man should want work; than that great works should want a man answerable to their weight." When I look back to the last eighteen months of my life, and, at the same time, seriously consider these wise and pious sentiments of Hall, I am not without a self-jealousy of forwardness, precipitancy, and boldness. God grant that the tendency to such defects may be daily lessened in me; and that, at the same time, I may grow in zeal, and modestly and profitably discharge the duties of the station I am placed in.

LETTER CCCLXXXVIII.

MR. KNOX'S reply.

MY DEAR MR. JEBB,

Jan. 28, 1804.

I greatly thank you for your right pleasant letter. The amiable apostle Saint John says, in his third Epistle, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." And I conceive the substance of his sentiment is entailed upon all, that inherit any real portion of his Christian feelings.

I believe I felt a good deal in this way when I read your account of yourself. You have heard me quote that beautiful sentence of Boethius,

Fœlix qui potuit boni
Fontem visere lucidum.

The quiet serenity you have tasted, and, I trust, are tasting, is a prelibation from this fountain. "Great peace have they who love thy law," is a natural, as well as a divine truth; a platonic, no less than a scriptural sentiment. And, certainly, these feelings are given, to make it be known, by experience, that "wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

Bishop Hall was a thoroughly Christian man; of great powers of mind and genuine piety. It is remarkable how his piety brightens towards the close of his life. It might be supposed, that there was something to be overcome in him, and therefore such sharp sufferings were permitted to come upon him; but, his Free Prisoner, and his Soul's Farewell to Earth and approach to Heaven, or some such name, shows a completely humble, spiritual, and heavenly mind. He was of a different school from my greatest favourites; but he had in him the root of the matter, and was an excellent man.

These early post-hours make it unavoidable to write short letters, if one writes at all in the evening. I could not write in the morning; and the time so presses, that I must only add now, that I am always most truly and affectionately yours,

ALEXANDER KNOX.

LETTER CCCLXXXIX.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. to the REV. J. NEWTON.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Olney, Nov. 7, 1781.

Mr. Bull is an honest man. We have seen him twice since he received your orders to march hither, and faithfully told us it was in consequence of those orders that he came. He dined with us yesterday; we were all in pretty good spirits, and the day passed very agreeably. It is not long since he called on Mr. Scott. Mr. R—— came in. Mr. Bull began, addressing himself to the former, “My friend you are in trouble; you are unhappy; I read it in your countenance.” Mr. Scott replied, he had been so, but he was better. “Come then,” says Mr. Bull, “I will expound to you the cause of all your anxiety. You are too common; you make yourself cheap. Visit your people less, and converse more with your own heart. How often do you speak to them in the week?” “Thrice.”—“Ay, there it is. Your sermons are an old ballad; your prayers are an old ballad; and you are an old ballad too.” “I would wish to tread in the steps of Mr. Newton.” “You do well to follow his steps in all other instances, but in this instance you are wrong and so was he. Mr. Newton trod a path which no man but himself could have used so long as he did, and he wore it out long before he went from Olney. Too much familiarity and conde-

scension cost him the estimation of his people. He thought he could insure their love, to which he had the best possible title ; and by those very means he lost it. Be wise, my friend ; take warning, make yourself scarce, if you wish that persons of little understanding should know how to prize you."

When he related to us this harangue, so adjusted to the case of the third person present, it did us both good, and as Jacques says,

" It made my lungs to crow like Chanticleer."

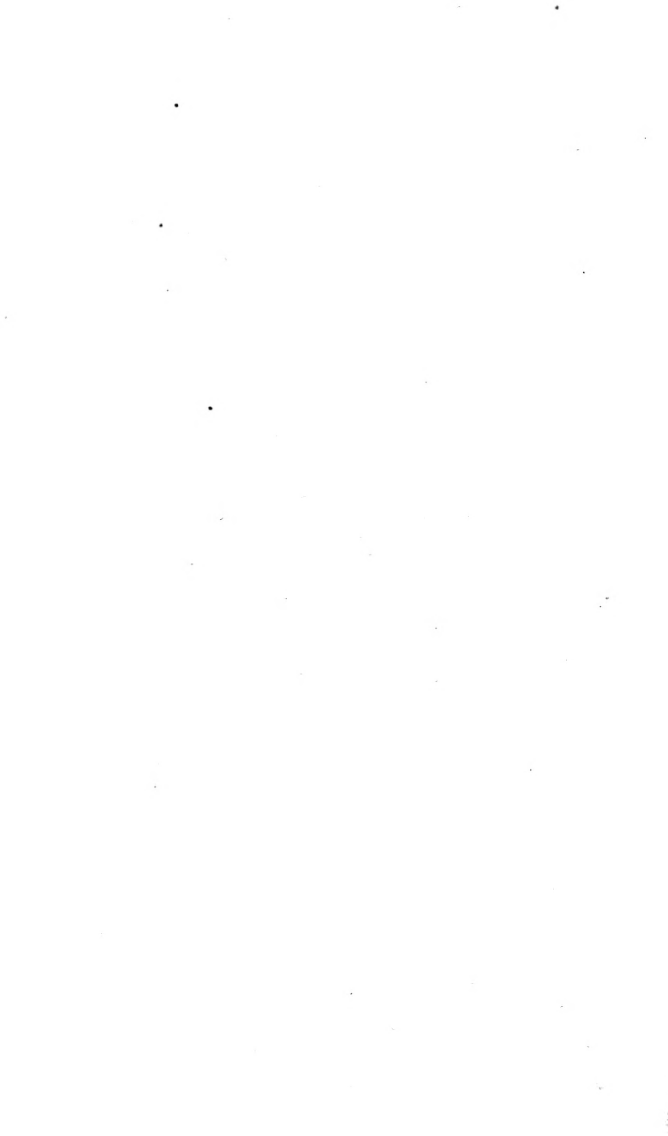
Our love of you both, though often sent to London, is still with us. If it is not an exhaustible well, (there is but one love, that can, with propriety, be called so,) it is, however, a very deep one, and not likely to fail while we are living.

Yours, my dear Sir,

W. C.

PART VII.

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS.



PART VII.

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS.

LETTER CCCXC.

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON to a FRIEND. Who are the most perfect Christians.

Dec. 13th, 1676.

And now I have begun, I would end just here; for I have nothing to say, nothing of affairs (to be sure) private nor public; and to strike up to discourses of devotion, alas! what is there to be said, but what you sufficiently know, and daily read, and daily think, and, I am confident, daily endeavour to do? And I am beaten back, if I had a great mind to speak of such things, by the sense of so great deficiency, in doing those things that the most ignorant among Christians cannot choose but know. Instead of all fine notions, I fly to *Κύριε ἐλέησον, Χριστὲ ἐλέησον*. I think them the great heroes and excellent persons of the world that attain to high degrees of pure contemplation and divine love; but next to those, them that in aspiring

to that, and falling short of it, fall down into deep humility, and self-contempt, and a real desire to be despised and trampled on by all the world. And I believe they that sink lowest into that depth, stand nearest to advancement to those other heights; for the great King, who is the fountain of that honour, hath given us this character of himself, that he resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble. Farewell, my dear friend, and be so charitable as sometimes, in your addresses upwards, to remember a poor caitiff, who no day forgets you.

R. L.

LETTER CCCXCI.

RICHARD BAXTER to the EARL OF LAUDERDALE, in reply to offers of considerable preferment, if he would accompany him to Scotland. Illustrative of his character, and supplying a curious picture of his circumstances at that time.

MY LORD,

June 24, 1670.

Being deeply sensible of your lordship's favours, and especially for your liberal offers for my entertainment in Scotland, I humbly return you my very hearty thanks; but the following considerations forbid me to entertain any hopes, or further thoughts of such a removal.

The experience of my great weakness and decay of strength, and particularly of this last winter's pain, and how much worse I am in winter than in summer, fully persuades me that I should live but a little while in Scotland, and that in a dis-

abled condition, rather keeping my bed than the pulpit.

I am engaged in writing a book, which, if I could hope to live to finish, is almost all the service I expect to do to God and his church more in the world—a Latin *Methodus Theologiæ*. Indeed, I can hardly hope to live so long, as it requires yet nearly a year's labour more. Now, if I should spend that half-year or year, which should finish this work in travel, and the trouble of such a removal, and then leave it undone, it would disappoint me of the ends of my life. I live only for work, and therefore should remove only for work, and not for wealth and honours, if ever I remove.

If I were there, all that I could hope for, were liberty to preach the gospel of salvation, and especially in some university among young scholars. But I hear that you have enough already for this work, who are likely to do it better than I can.

I have a family, and in it a mother-in-law of eighty years of age, of honourable extract and great worth, whom I must not neglect, and who cannot travel. To such an one as I, it is so great a business to remove a family, with all our goods and books, so far that it deterreth me from thinking of it, especially having paid so dear for removals these eight years as I have done; and being but yesterday settled in a house which I have newly taken, and that with great trouble and loss of time. And, if I should find Scotland disagree with me, which I fully conclude it would, I must remove all back again.

All these things concur to deprive me of the benefit of your lordship's favour. But, my lord, there are other parts of it which I am not altogether hopeless of receiving. When I am commanded "to pray for kings, and all in authority," I am allowed the ambition of this preferment, which is all that ever I aspired after, "to live a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty." *Diu nimis habitavit anima mea inter osos pacis.*

I am weary of the noise of contentious revilers, and have oft had thoughts to go into a foreign land, if I could find where I might have a healthful air and quietness, but to live and die in peace. When I sit in a corner, and meddle with nobody, and hope the world will forget that I am alive, court, city, and country are still filled with clamours against me. When a preacher wanteth preferment, his way is to preach or write a book against the nonconformists, and me by name; so that the *menstrua* of the press, and the pulpits of some, are bloody invectives against myself, as if my peace were inconsistent with the kingdom's happiness. Never did my eyes read such impudent untruths in matter of fact as such writings contain. They cry out for answers and reasons of my nonconformity, while they know the law forbiddeth me to answer them unlicensed. I expect not that any favour or justice of my superiors should cure this; but, if I might but be heard to speak for myself before I be judged by them, and such things believed, (for, to condemn the judgment of my rulers is to dishonour them,) I would request that I might be allowed to

live quietly, to follow my private studies, and might once again have the use of my books, which I have not seen these ten years. I pay for a room for their standing in at Kidderminster, where they are eaten by worms and rats; having no sufficient security for my quiet abode in any place, to encourage me to send for them. I would also ask that I might have the liberty every beggar hath, to travel from town to town. I mean but to London, to oversee the press, when any thing of mine is licensed for it. If I be sent to Newgate for preaching Christ's gospel, (for I dare not sacrilegiously renounce my calling, to which I am consecrated *per sacramentum ordinis*,) I would request the favour of a better prison, where I may but walk and write. These I should take as very great favours, and acknowledge your lordship my benefactor if you procure them: for I will not so much injure you as to desire, or my reason as to expect, any greater matters; no, not the benefit of the law.

I think I broke no law in any of the preachings of which I am accused. I most confidently think, that no law imposeth on me the Oxford oath, any more than on any conformable minister; and I am past doubting the present mittimus for my imprisonment is quite without law. But, if the justices think otherwise now, or at any time, I know no remedy. I have a license to preach publicly in London diocese, under the archbishop's own hand and seal, which is yet valid for occasional sermons, though not for lectures or cures; but, I dare not use it, because it is in the bishop's power to recall it.

Would but the bishop, who, one should think, would not be against the preaching of the gospel, not recall my license, I could preach occasional sermons, which would absolve my conscience from all obligation to private preaching. For it is not maintenance that I expect. I never received a farthing for my preaching, to my knowledge since May 1, 1662. I thank God I have food and raiment, without being chargeable to any man, which is all that I desire, had I but leave to preach for nothing; and that only where there is a notorious necessity. I humbly crave your lordship's pardon for the tediousness of this letter; and again return you my very great thanks for your great favours,
And remain, &c.

LETTER CCCXCII.

JOHN EVELYN to SIR SAMUEL TUKE. Condolence on the loss of his wife. Account of the fire of London.

SIR,

Says-court, Sept. 27, 1666.

It was some four days before the most fatal conflagration of the (quondam) city of London that I addressed a few lines to you; little thinking I should so soon have had two such dissolutions to deplore; the burning of the best town in the world; and the decease of the best friend in the world, your excellent lady. Sir, you know they are but small afflictions that are loquacious—great ones are silent; and, if ever great ones there were, mine eyes have

beheld, and mine ears heard them, with an heart so possessed with sorrow, that it is not easily expressed; because the instances have been altogether stupendous and unparalleled. But it were in vain to entertain you with those formal topics, which are wont to be applied to persons of less fortitude and Christian resignation, though I cannot but exhort you to what I know you do—look upon all things in this world as transitory and perishing; sent us upon condition of quitting them cheerfully, when God pleases to take them from us. This consideration alone (with the rest of those graces which God has furnished you withal) will be able to alleviate your passion, and to preserve you from succumbing under your pressures, which I confess are weighty, but not insupportable: live therefore, I conjure you, and help to restore your dear country, and to console your friends. There is none alive wishes you more sincere happiness than my poor family.

I suppose I should have heard ere this from you of all your concernments; but impute your silence to some possible miscarriage of your letters; since the usual place of address is with the rest reduced to ashes, and made an heap of ruins. I would give you a more particular relation of this calamitous accident, but I should oppress you with sad stories, and, I question not but they are come too soon amongst you at Paris, with all minuteness, and (were it possible) hyperbolies. There is this yet of less deplorable in it: that, as it has pleased God to order it, little effects of any great consequence have

been lost, besides the houses :—that our merchants at the same instant in which it was permitted that the tidings should fly over seas, had so settled all their affairs, as they complied with their foreign correspondence as punctually as if no disaster at all had happened; nor do we hear of so much as one that has failed. The Exchange is now at Gresham College. The rest of the city (which may consist of near a seventh part) and suburbs peopled with new shops, the same noise, business, and commerce, not to say vanity. Only the poor booksellers have been indeed ill-treated by Vulcan; so many noble impressions consumed by their trusting them to the churches, as the loss is estimated near two hundred thousand pounds: which will be an extraordinary detriment to the whole republic of learning. In the mean time, the king and parliament are infinitely zealous for the rebuilding of our ruins; and I believe it will universally be the employment of the next spring; they are now busied with adjusting the claims of each proprietor, that so they may dispose things for the building after the noblest model. Every body brings in his idea; among the rest, I presented his majesty my own conceptions, with a discourse annexed. It was the second that was seen, within two days after the conflagration; but Dr. Wren had got the start of me. Both of us did coincide so frequently, that his majesty was not displeased with it, and it caused divers alterations; and truly there was never a more glorious phoenix upon earth, if it do at last emerge out of these cinders, and as the design

is laid with the present fervour of the undertakers. But these things are as yet immature ; and I pray God we may enjoy peace to encourage these fair dispositions. The miracle is, I have never in my life observed a more universal resignation, less repining amongst sufferers ; which makes me hope, that God has yet thoughts of mercy towards us. Judgments do not always end where they begin ; and therefore let none exult over our calamities. We know not whose turn it may be next. But, sir, I forbear to entertain you longer on these sad reflections, but persist to beg you not to suffer any transportations unbecoming a man of virtue : resolve to preserve yourself, if it be possible, for better times, the good and restoration of your country, and the comfort of your friends and relations, and amongst them of, sir,

Yours, &c.

LETTER CCCXCIII.

DANIEL DE FOE to his son-in-law, MR. BAKER. One of the most affecting letters ever written.

About two miles from Greenwich, Kent,
Tuesday, Aug. 12, 1730.

DEAR MR. BAKER,

I have your very kind and affectionate letter of the first ; but not come to my hand until the tenth : where it had been delayed I know not. As your kind manner, and kinder thought from

which it flows, (for I take all you say to be as I always believed you to be, sincere and Nathaniel like, without guile,) was a particular satisfaction to me; so the stop of a letter, however it happened, deprived me of that cordial too many days, considering how much I stood in need of it, to support a mind sinking under the weight of an affliction too heavy for my strength, and looking on myself as abandoned of every comfort, every friend, and every relative, except such only as are able to give me no assistance.

I was sorry you should say at the beginning of your letter, you were debarred seeing me. Depend upon my sincerity for this, I am far from debarring you. On the contrary, it would be a greater comfort to me than any I now enjoy, that I could have your agreeable visits with safety, and could see both you and my dearest Sophia, could it be without giving her the grief of seeing her father "*in tenebris*," and under the load of insupportable sorrows. I am sorry I must open my griefs so far as to tell her, it is not the blow I received from a wicked, perjured, and contemptible enemy, that has broken in upon my spirit; which, as she well knows, has carried me on through greater disasters than these. But it has been the injustice, unkindness, and, I must say, inhuman dealing of my own son, which has both ruined my family, and, in a word, has broken my heart; and as I am at this time under a weight of very heavy illness, which I think will be a fever, I take this occasion to vent my grief in the breasts who I know will

make a prudent use of it, and tell you, that nothing but this has conquered or could conquer me, "*Et tu Brute.*" I depended upon him; I trusted him; I gave up my two dear unprovided children into his hands; but he has no compassion, and suffers them and their poor dying mother to beg their bread at his door, and to crave, as if it were an alms, what he is bound under hand and seal, besides the most sacred promises, to supply them with; himself, at the same time, living in a profusion of plenty. It is too much for me. Excuse my infirmity, I can say no more; my heart is too full. I only ask one thing of you as a dying request. Stand by them when I am gone, and let them not be wronged, while he is able to do them right. Stand by them as a brother; and if you have any thing within you owing to my memory, who have bestowed on you the best gift I had to give, let them not be injured and trampled on by false pretences, and unnatural reflections. I hope they will want no help but that of comfort and counsel; but that they will indeed want, being too easy to be managed by words and promises.

It adds to my grief that it is so difficult to me to see you. I am at a distance from London, in Kent; nor have I a lodging in London; nor have I been at that place in the Old Bailey, since I wrote you, I was removed from it. At present I am weak, having had some fits of a fever that have left me low. But those things much more.

I have not seen son or daughter, wife or child,

many weeks, and know not which way to see them. They dare not come by water, and by land here is no coach, and I know not what to do.

It is not possible for me to come to Enfield, unless you could find a retired lodging for me, where I might not be known, and might have the comfort of seeing you both, now and then: upon such a circumstance, I could gladly give the days to solitude, to have the comfort of half an hour, now and then, with you both for two or three weeks. But just to come and look at you, and retire immediately, it is a burden too heavy. The parting will be a price beyond the enjoyment.

I would say, (I hope,) with comfort, that it is yet well I am so near my journey's end, and am hastening to the place where the weary are at rest, and where the wicked cease to trouble; be it that the passage is rough, and the day stormy, by what way soever He please to bring me to the end of it, I desire to finish life with this temper of soul in all cases: "*Te Deum laudamus.*"

I congratulate you on the occasion of your happy advance in your employment. May all you do be prosperous, and all you meet with pleasant; and may you both escape the tortures and troubles of uneasy life. May you sail the dangerous voyage of life with a *forcing wind*, and make the port of heaven *without a storm*.

It adds to my grief that I must never see the pledge of your mutual love, my little grandson. Give him my blessing, and may he be to you both your joy in youth, and your comfort in age, and

never add a sigh to your sorrow. But, alas! that is not to be expected. Kiss my dear Sophy once more for me; and if I must see her no more, tell her this is from a father that loved her above all his comforts, to his last breath.

Your unhappy,

D. F.

LETTER CCCXCIV.

JOHN LOCKE to MR. MOLYNEUX. A striking testimony to the *completeness* and *excellence* of the moral system of the gospel.

Oates, March 30, 1696.

As to a “treatise of morals,” I must own to you that you are not the only persons (you and Mr. Burridge, I mean) who have been for putting me upon it; neither have I wholly laid by the thoughts of it. Nay, I so far incline to comply with your desires, that I, every now and then, lay by some materials for it, as they occasionally occur in the roving of my mind. But when I consider, that a book of offices, as you call it, ought not to be slightly done, especially by me, after what I have said of that science in my essay; and that *nonumque prematur in annum*, is a rule more necessary to be observed in a subject of that consequence, than in any thing Horace speaks of; I am in doubt, whether it would be prudent, in one of my age and health, not to mention other dis-

abilities in me, to set about it. Did the world want a rule, I confess there could be no work so necessary, nor so commendable. But the gospel contains so perfect a body of ethics, that reason may be excused from that inquiry, since she may find man's duty clearer and easier in revelation, than in herself. Think not this the excuse of a lazy man, though it be, perhaps, of one who, having a sufficient rule for his actions is content therewith, and thinks he may, perhaps, with more profit to himself, employ the little time and strength he has, in other researches, wherein he finds himself more in the dark.

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My Lord Deputy and you did too great honour to the paper I sent you, and to me, upon that account. I know too well the deficiency of my style, to think it deserves the commendations you give it. That which makes my writings tolerable, if any thing, is only this, that I never write for any thing but truth, and never publish any thing to others, which I am not fully persuaded of myself, and do not think I understand. So that I never have need of false colours to set off the weak part of an hypothesis, or of obscure expressions, or the assistance of artificial jargon, to cover an error in my system or party. Where I am ignorant (for what is our knowledge?) I own it. And though I am not proud of my errors, yet I am ready and glad to be convinced of any of them. I think there wants nothing, but such a preference of truth to party interest and vain-glory, to make

any body outdo me, in what you seem so much to admire.

I am, dear sir,

Your most affectionate humble servant,

JOHN LOCKE.

LETTER CCCXCV.

BISHOP Warburton to Dr. Doddridge. On the perusal of the first volume of the Family Expositor.

DEAR SIR,

Cambridge, April 11, 1739.

I write to you amidst a strange mixture of entertainments and study, between the college halls and libraries. The necessity of consulting books only to be met with here, has brought me to Cambridge; but my long nights in company make my mornings by myself so very short, that I am likely to return as wise as I came; which will be in a few days.

Before I left the country, I had the pleasure of receiving your Family Expositor. My mother and I took it by turns. She, who is so superior to me in every thing, aspired to the divine learning of the improvements, while I kept groveling in the human learning in the notes below. The result of all was, that she says she is sure you are a very good man, and I am sure you are a very learned one.

I sat down to your notes with a great deal of

malice, and a determined resolution not to spare you. And let me tell you, a man who comments on the Bible affords all the opportunity a caviller could wish for. But your judgment is always so true and your decision so right, that I am as unprofitable a reader to you as the least of your flock.

A friend of mine, Dr. Taylor, of Newark, (M. D.) who has seen your book, desires to be a subscriber. If you will be so good as to order a book to be left for him at Mr. Gyles's he has orders to pay for it.

I have taken the liberty to inclose two or three papers of proposals, just now offered to the public by my friend, Dr. Middleton, for his *Life of Tully*.

I am, dear sir,

Your very affectionate friend and brother,

W. WARBURTON.

LETTER CCCXCVI.

BISHOP WARBURTON to DR. DODDRIDGE. A curious account of his own habits.

DEAR SIR,

I propose to have it ⁽¹⁾ out about Easter; and yet, to my shame I must tell you, though it consists of three books, the first is not yet entirely printed; and that I have not yet composed the far greatest part of the

(1) Second volume of his *Divine Legation*.

other two. To let you into this mystery, I must acquaint you with my faults and imperfections, the common occasion of all profane mysteries. I am naturally very indolent, and apt to be disgusted with what has been any time in my hands or thoughts. When I published my first volume, I intended to set about the remainder immediately, but found such a disgust to an old subject that I deferred it from month to month, and year to year; till at length, not being able to conquer my listlessness, I was forced to have recourse to an old expedient. That is, to begin to set the press on work, and so oblige myself unavoidably to keep it going. I began this project last year, but grew weary again before I had half got through the first book; and there it stuck till just now, when I set it going again, and have absolutely promised the bookseller to supply him constantly with copy till the whole volume is printed, and to get it ready by Lady-day. So that now I hurry through it in a strange manner, and you may expect to find it as incorrect as the former, and for the same reason. Yet I had resolved against serving this volume so; and still my evil nature prevailed, and I find, at length, it is in vain to strive with it.

I take no pride, I will assure you, in telling you my infirmities. I confess myself as to a friend without any manner of affectation; and that you may see it is so, I would not have you think that natural indolence alone makes me thus play the fool. Distractions of various kinds, inseparable from human life, joined with a habit naturally me-

lancholy, contribute greatly to increase my indolence, and force me often to seek in letters nothing but mere amusement. This makes my reading wild and desultory: and I seek refuge from the uneasiness of thought from any book, let it be what it will, that can engage my attention. There is no one whose good opinion I more value than yours; and the marks you give me of it make me so vain, that I am resolved to humble myself in making you this confession.

By my manner of writing upon subjects, you would naturally imagine they afford me pleasure and attach me thoroughly: I will assure you, NO! I have much amused myself in human learning to wear away the tedious hours inseparable from a melancholy habit; but no earthly thing gives me pleasure, except the ties of natural relationship, and the friendship of good men; and for all views of happiness, I have no notion of such a thing, but in the prospects which revealed religion affords us. You see how I treat you, as if you were my confessor. You are in a more sacred relation to me: I regard you as my friend!

I am, dear sir,

Your most affectionate brother and friend,
and faithful humble servant,

W. WARBURTON.

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LETTER CCCXCVII.

BISHOP Warburton to Dr. Doddridge, after a visit at his house.

DEAR SIR,

May 28, 1741.

After an extremely fatiguing journey in the stage-coach with very indifferent company, increased by worse taken up on the road, I reached Mr. Gyles's between eight and nine last night.

I have abundance of thanks to return for the very friendly entertainment I met with at Northampton, from you and your excellent lady. I must tell you frankly, you have more happiness than comes to the share of one man, and to make it the more exquisite, of several kinds. Providence has treated you with a feast of many courses, which none but a good Levite under the old law, when the dispensation was exact, could fairly pretend to. That you may long enjoy every part of it, especially "that last and best—which shares and doubles all the rest," is the earnest prayer of,

Dear sir,

Your most affectionate brother and friend,

W. Warburton.

LETTER CCCXCVIII.

DR. DODDRIDGE to REV. B. FAWCETT. Dr. Doddridge's character of Lady Huntingdon. A striking incident.

Northampton, June 26, 1750.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry for any abatement in your well-earned possessions; but when all we have is devoted to the Lord, we bear losses as stewards, rather than as proprietors. I bless God this earth is less and less to me, and I could willingly have done with it should it please my Master to give me leave. Yet for him I would live and labour, and, I hope, if such were his will, suffer too.

Lady Huntingdon, for whom I desired your prayers, is wonderfully recovered. She walked with me in the garden and park, and almost wearied me; such is her recruit of strength: but the strength of her soul is amazing. I think I never saw so much of the image of God in any woman upon earth. Were I to write what I know of her, it would fill your heart with wonder, joy, and praise. She desired me to educate a lad for the dissenting ministry at her expense, till he be fit to come into my academy on an exhibition; and this is but one of a multitude of good works she is continually performing. I must tell you, however, one observation of hers which struck me much: "None," said she, "know how to prize Christ but those who are zealous in good works.

Men know not till they try what poor imperfect things our best works are, and how deficient we are in them; and the experience of that sweetness which attends their performance makes us more sensible of those obligations to him whose grace is the principle of them in our hearts." She has God dwelling in her, and she is ever bearing her testimony to the present salvation he has given us, and to the fountain of living waters which she feels springing up in her soul, so that she knows the divine original of the promises, before the performance of them to her, as she knows God to be her Creator by the life he has given her.

As I was setting out on my blessed journey to her, for such indeed it was, yesterday was sevensnight, a terrible accident happened in my study, which might have been attended with fatal consequences: I had been sealing a letter with a little roll of wax, and I thought I had blown it out, when, fanned by the motion of the air, as I arose in haste, it was rekindled. It burned about a quarter of an hour while we were at prayer, and would have gone on to consume perhaps the closet and the house, had not my opposite neighbour seen the flame and given an alarm. When I came up, I found my desk, which was covered with papers, burning like an altar; many letters, papers of memorandums, and schemes for sermons, were consumed. My book of accounts was on fire, and the names at the top almost burnt through; a volume of the Family Expositor, the original MSS. from the Corinthians to Ephesians, surrounded with flames, and drench-

ed in melted wax; the fire had kindled up around it, and burned off some leaves, and the corners of the other books, so that there is not one leaf entire: and yet, so did God moderate the rage of this element, and determine in his Providence the time of our entrance, that not one account is rendered uncertain by what it suffered, nor is one line which had not been transcribed destroyed in the MS. I have to add, that all my vouchers for Miss Ekin's money, all my sermons and MSS. intended for the press, and among the rest the remainder of the Family Expositor, were all in such danger, that the fire, in another quarter of an hour, had probably consumed them. Observe, my dear friend, the hand of God, and magnify the Lord with me.

I earnestly beg your prayers, and entreat you to salute my praying friends with redoubled salutations in this view, and with this message: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all your spirits, and with your families." I cannot say how affectionately I am,

Dear sir,

Your ever faithful friend, brother,

and obliged servant,

P. DODDRIDGE.

LETTER CCCXCIX.

MR. BARKER to DR. DODDRIDGE. Beautiful character of the latter.

DEAR DOCTOR,

London, July 3, 1750.

If ever it should happen that Northampton should become unworthy of your labours, there are places enough that would gladly receive you ; but I am much more apprehensive of your death, than of the danger of your losing the esteem of that place ; not you only, but your memory, will surely be blessed there. But are you aware what a creature you are ? I love you beyond expression, and admire your abilities, furniture, and spirits, more than you imagine ; and not a man in the world rejoices more in your usefulness than I do, and yet I often make myself merry with your character and conduct : I will give you a sketch of it. You are so entirely devoted to God, to truth and holiness, that it is very easy to impose upon you under the appearance of any of these ; and are so perfectly made up of candour and good nature, that a pious enthusiast, or a godly dunce, is welcome to your table and heart. You are so good yourself that you think every body else ten times better than they are ; see merit in the darkness of midnight ; cannot see faults without a noonday sun ; forgive injuries before they are confessed ; confer favours as a reward for affronts ; and will never believe but that all who are in good earnest in religion, and

enter into the belief, practice, life, and spirit of it, are to be embraced by you, because Christ receives them, let their opinions or denominations be what they will : now how should you be a party man, or be likely to have your academy supplied by people who live upon notions, phrases, and external forms ! You—but I will not oblige you any further now, but thank you for that Sermon on Candour, which is the very picture of your mind, and highly relished by

Your faithful and affectionate brother

BARKER.

LETTER CCCC.

DR. DODDRIDGE to MR. HUGHES. Thoughts on retirement and publicity.

DEAR SIR,

June 28, 1726, Midnight.

I received your last of the 23rd instant the morning after it was written, and own I deserve a little of the severity with which you complain of the shortness of the note you refer to. To affect to fill a page with two lines is indeed a very compendious, but not a very equitable commerce ; however, you must remember that I told you I quickly intended to favour you again, and moreover, you see that I have begun to do so, but when I shall end I know not. I fear you are in danger of three pages, and then you will be paid at the rate of more than

two hundred per cent. for I have not been a quarter of a year in your debt. If you wonder at so accurate a computation, you must recollect that a few months ago I had some thoughts of matrimony, which naturally led me into sundry speculations of management and economy, which had not before been very familiar.

Your sentiments on the head of retirement are agreeable to that modesty and gentleness of temper which make a very amiable part of your character; and it is indeed an argument of the greatness of your soul that you can despise fame, and retire with indifference out of the air of popular applause when master of the talent that may attract and command it.

But after all, my friend, you must not think of "passing through the world like a subterraneous stream," as you beautifully express it, or of spending your life in a hermitage, wrapt in this learned and polite luxury. God has endowed you with capacities which are not always to be buried in retirement; so bright a lamp was not lighted up to be consumed in a sepulchre; but rather to be placed upon an eminence, whence its rays may be diffused for public advantage, and where it may be a happy instrument of conducting many through this gloomy desert to the regions of eternal joy. I therefore hope, and I believe, that it is your constant prayer that all your studies may be subservient to such service; and when Providence calls you to a more public station, I question not but you will be willing to quit your cell, charming

as it is, that you may enter upon a round of employments, at least more important, if not equally delicate with those which you now pursue. This is an act of self-denial which our duty requires, and which will be acceptable to God in proportion to our fondness for those elegancies, which we are content to resign, that we may attend to the advancement of the kingdom and interests of heaven. The applause of our heavenly Master will indeed be an abundant recompense for all the pleasures we can give up for his sake; and before we receive that public remuneration, we shall find such an interest in the exercise of benevolence towards our fellow-creatures, and in the hope of promoting their everlasting felicity as we can never find in our converse with Pliny, Virgil, Tully, or any of the favourite attendants of our solitude. Popularity is in itself a most contemptible thing; but in this view it may justly appear desirable. However, you, my friend, need not be solicitous about it; do but appear in public, and follow nature, and it will flow in upon you without your care. I think I may with the utmost propriety apply to you what Pliny says to Caninius Rufus, *In modo enitere ut tibi ipse sis tanti, quanti videberis aliis si tibi fueris.*

I am, dear Sir,

Your most affectionate and obedient Friend,

P. DODDRIDGE.

LETTER CCCCI.

REV. AUGUSTUS TOPLADY to AMBROSE SERLE, Esq.
Singular incident.

Broad Hembury, July 8, 1774.

Shall I attempt to thank my ever dear and ever respected friend, for his polite and obliging favour of the 30th ult., or for the kind services which preceded that favour, and to which it refers? No: it is a duty, to whose performance I feel myself unequal. Your friendship, therefore, like what some say concerning virtue at large, must be its own reward; yet, think me not insensible. My sensibility is the very cause of the omission. Were the obligations, under which you lay me, more moderate, I could with ease thank you for them; but, as the case stands, I must follow Horace's direction, *Consule quid valeant humeri*; and not aim at impossibilities.

Sure I am, that God will incline the scale, (and not this only, but every other, to the end of time,) so as shall conduce to his own glory, and to the accomplishment of his own purpose. It is ours, to use the means in a dependence on his absolute providence; to bless the means used, is his. With him all events must be ultimately rested; and, I trust, I can say, *ex animo*, with him I ever wish and desire to rest them: nor would I have a single incident removed out of his hand, were I possessed of all power, both in heaven and earth.

You are so good as to inquire after my safe return into the West. I bless God my journey was both safe and pleasant. The slightest mercies ought to be thankfully received and noticed; for they are as absolutely undeserved as the greatest. We can no more merit a moment's ease, or safety, or happiness, in our going out and coming in, or any other occasion whatever, than we can merit the kingdom of heaven.

I travelled with a very old friend (or rather with a very early) acquaintance: an officer of the 21st regiment: with whom, at our first setting off in the coach from London, I had an hour or two's controversy concerning the lawfulness of duelling. Your friend was on the negative side of the question; the captain on the affirmative. During the amicable skirmish, (a duel against duelling,) and for many hours after, we were quite ignorant of each other's names. And no wonder; for we had not met since the year 1757, when both were lads; and time has made such alteration in each, that neither knew the other. We travelled to Bridport, (that is, one hundred and thirty-eight miles) before we found out who was who; and I have seldom known an *eclaircissement* which gave more pleasure on both sides. The captain, very politely, invited me to see him, if I should ever go to Plymouth; and, on my asking for whom I should enquire, the discovery was made.

On a review, I am really ashamed of trespassing on your patience and time, by such petty chit-chat.

It is high season for me to apologize; not by prolific excuses, but by cutting matters short at once. Only observing, that, if the unexpected sight of an old and valued friend on earth, gives a heart-felt joy, which none but a breast formed for friendship can experience, what far more exceeding and exalted blessedness must result from that "communion of saints" made perfect which will obtain in the kingdom of glory! Until then, and when there, I am, and shall ever be,

Your affectionate friend,
AUGUSTUS TOPLADY.

LETTER CCCCII.

REV. AUGUSTUS TOPLADY to MRS. MACAULEY. A curious interview.

Broad Hembury, July 8, 1774.

One day, when Mr. Ryland and I went to Islington, to dine with Mrs. Bacon, he took that opportunity of introducing me to Mr. Burgh, author of the "Political Disquisitions." I saw him to great disadvantage, as he was in much pain, and in a very ill humour. The interview, on the whole, was a curious one. I was hardly seated, when he said to Mr. Ryland, concerning me, "This gentleman, I apprehend, is an antagonist of Mr. Lindsey's." I answered for myself, "No, sir. I am

not, indeed, of Mr. Lindsey's principles, but I look upon him, with all his mistakes, to be an honest man ; and I respect an honest man, be his opinions what they will." By degrees our conversation grew rather engaging ; and Mr. Burgh seemed, for a while, to feel a truce from the torments of the stone, and assumed some degree of good-nature. But I should have had a sharp onset, if he had been in perfect health. Even as it was, he could not forbear feeling my pulse on the article of free-will. In the course of our debate I drove him into this dreadful refuge, namely, that " God does all he possibly can" (these were Mr. Burgh's own words) " to hinder moral and natural evil, but he cannot prevail : men will not permit God to have his wish." Lest I should mistake his meaning, I requested him to repeat those terms again, which he did. " Then the Deity," said I, " must needs be a very unhappy being." " Not in the least," replied Burgh. " What," rejoined I, " disappointed of his wishes, embarrassed in his views, and defeated of his schemes, and yet not be unhappy ?" " No," rejoined Burgh : " for he knows that he must be so disappointed and defeated, and that there is no help for it ; and therefore he submits to necessity, and does not make himself unhappy about it." A strange idea this of the Supreme Being ! At coming away, I told Mr. Burgh, that however he might suppose God to be disappointed of his will, I hoped the public would not be disappointed of the remaining volumes of the Political Disquisitions yet unfinished. And, in very truth,

madam, your friend Burgh is much better qualified for political disquisitions, than either for theological or for metaphysical ones. Adieu.

AUGUSTUS TOPLADY.

LETTER CCCCHII.

REV. AUGUSTUS TOPLADY to MR. H——, after hearing
Theophilus Lindsey.

Titchfield-street, London, May 23, 1774.

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Yesterday afternoon, being Whitsunday, curiosity led me to hear Mr. Theophilus Lindsey, who lately resigned the vicarage of Catterick. I took care to be there before any of the service began, in order to hear what that gentleman calls the reformed liturgy; but what may more truly be termed the liturgy deformed. It is a wretched skeleton of the old Common Prayer, shorn and castrated of all its evangelical excellencies.

He preached, or rather read a poor, dry, ungrateful harangue on Matt. xxv. 14, 15. So wretchedly was he tied and bound by the chain of his notes, that, if by accident, he happened to take his eye from his papers (and it happened several times) he was sure to blunder; and endeavoured, in an exceedingly confused and embarrassed manner, to gather up the broken thread as well as he could. He is a palpable Arian in his ideas of Christ's person;

and appears to be a thorough-paced Socinian, as far as concerns the doctrine of atonement. Yet, God forbid that I should judge and condemn him. To his own Master he must stand or fall. But I must observe two things: 1. I bless the grace of God, for giving me eyes to see, and a heart to value the inestimable truths of his holy gospel: 2. I never prized our good old liturgy, and the precious doctrines of the Reformation, more than on hearing Mr. Lindsey's liturgy and sermon yesterday. "No man" (as our Lord observes) "having drank old wine, straightway desireth new: for he saith, the old is better."

Mr. Lindsey's Arian meeting is held in Essex-street, up one pair of stairs, in the house called Essex House. It is a long narrow room (which, if filled, would hold about two hundred people) where auctions (particularly for books) used to be held. He seems to be a man of much personal modesty and diffidence; and, I verily believe, acts upon principle. But he has no popular talents; no pathos, no dignity, no imagination, no elegance, no elocution. He must, unavoidably, soon sink into obscurity, when the novelty of his secession begins to subside, and when his Arian friends are weary of puffing him off in the newspapers. Take my word for it (and I am very glad I can truly have it to say) the church of England has nothing to fear from a gentleman of Mr. Lindsey's slender abilities. He can neither thunder nor lighten; but crawls on quite in the hum-drum way; and is no more qualified, either by nature or attainments, to

figure at the head of a party, than I am to undertake the command of a navy. One of my company (for a whole coachful of us went) said to me, after service was over: "Well, I suppose you will call Mr. Lindsey's discourse a piece of arrant Lindsey-woolsey." "No, indeed," replied I: "it was mere Lindsey throughout: absolute Arianism, Socinianism, and Pelagianism, without one thread of the contrary from first to last."

AUGUSTUS TOPLADY.

LETTER CCCCIV.

REV. JOHN NEWTON to MR. W——. The great Physician.

MY DEAR SIR,

June 2, 1772.

It is true—I confess it. I have been very naughty. I ought not to have been so long in answering your last kind letter. Now I hope you have forgiven me. And therefore I at once recover my confidence without troubling you with such excuses as the old man, ever desirous of justifying himself, would suggest.

The illness under which I have laboured longer than the man mentioned by John, is far from being removed. Yet I am bound to speak well of my Physician: he treats me with great tenderness; assures me that it shall not be to death, but to the glory of God; and bids me in due time expect a perfect cure. I know too much of him (though I

know but little) to doubt either his skill or his promise. It is true I suffer sad relapses, and have been more than once brought in appearance to death's door since I have been under his care; but this fault has not been his, but my own. I am a strange refractory patient; have too often neglected his prescriptions, and broken the regimen he appoints me to observe. This perverseness, joined to the exceeding obstinacy of my disorders, would have caused me to be turned out as an incurable long ago, had I been under any hand but his. But, indeed, there is none like him. When I have brought myself low, he has still helped me. Blessed be his name, I am yet alive; yea, I shall ere long be well; but not here. The air which I breathe is unfavourable to my constitution, and nourishes my disease. He knows this, and intends, at a proper season, to remove me into a better climate, where there are no fogs nor damp, where the inhabitants shall no more say, I am sick. He has brought my judgment to acquiesce with his; and sometimes I long to hear him say, Arise and depart. But, to tell you the truth, I am much more frequently pleased with the thought of staying a little and a little longer here, though in my present situation I am kept alive merely by dint of medicine; and, though his medicines are all salutary, they are not all pleasant. Now and then he gives me a pleasant cordial; but many things which there is a need-be for my taking frequently, are bitter and unpalatable. It is strange that knowing this is, and must be the case, I am not more

desirous of my dismissal. I hope, however, one thing that makes me willing to stay is, that I may point him out as a Physician of value to others.

I am, my dear Sir,

Your affectionate and obliged servant,
J. NEWTON.

LETTER CCCC.V.

REV. JOHN NEWTON to REV. MR. R——. Fanatical abuse of Scripture exposed and condemned.

DEAR SIR,

Feb. 22, 1774.

Your letter by last post surprised and grieved me. We knew nothing of the subject, though Mrs. * * * remembers, when * * * was here, a hint or two were dropped which she did not understand; but no name was mentioned.

This instance shows the danger of leaning to impressions. Texts of Scripture, brought powerfully to the heart, are very desirable and pleasant, if their tendency is to humble us, to give us a more feeling sense of the preciousness of Christ, or of the doctrines of grace; if they make sin more hateful, enliven our regard to the means, or increase our confidence in the power and faithfulness of God. But if they are understood as intimating our path of duty in particular circumstances, or confirming us in purposes we may have already formed, not otherwise clearly warranted by the general strain of the word, or by the leadings of Pro-

vidence, they are for the most part ensnaring, and always to be suspected. Nor does their coming into the mind at the time of prayer give them more authority in this respect. When the mind is intent upon any subject, the imagination is often watchful to catch at any thing which may seem to countenance the favourite pursuit. It is too common to ask counsel of the Lord when we have already secretly determined for ourselves; and in this disposition we may easily be deceived by the sound of a text of Scripture, which, detached from the passage in which it stands, may seem remarkably to tally with our wishes. Many have been deceived this way; and sometimes, when the event has shown them they were mistaken, it has opened a door for great distress, and Satan has found occasion to make them doubt even of their most solid experiences.

I have sometimes talked to * * * upon this subject, though without the least suspicion of any thing like what has happened. As to the present case, it may remind us all of our weakness. I would recommend prayer, patience, much tenderness towards her, joined with faithful expostulation. Wait a little while, and I trust the Lord who loves her will break the snare. I am persuaded, in her better judgment, she would dread the thoughts of doing wrong; and I hope and believe the good Shepherd, to whom she has often committed her soul and her ways, will interpose to restore and set her to rights.

.

I am sorry you think any of whom you have hoped well are going back; but be not discouraged. I say again, pray and wait, and hope the best. It is common for young professors to have a slack time; it is almost necessary, that they may be more sensible of the weakness and deceitfulness of their hearts, and be more humbled in future, when the Lord shall have healed their breaches, and restored their souls. We join love to you and yours. Pray for us.

I am, &c.

J. NEWTON.

LETTER CCCCVI.

REV. JOHN NEWTON to REV. MR. B——. The virtue of
an *if*.

DEAR SIR,

August, 1778.

If the Lord affords health; if the weather be tolerable; if no unforeseen change takes place; if no company comes in upon me to-night, (which sometimes unexpectedly happens); with these provisos, Mr. S—— and I have engaged to travel to * * * on Monday next, and hope to be with you by or before eleven o'clock.

In such a precarious world, it is needful to form our plans at two days' distance, with precaution and exceptions.⁽¹⁾ However, if it be the Lord's will to bring us together, and if the purposed in-

(¹) James, iv. 13.

terview be for his glory and our good, then I am sure nothing shall prevent it. And who in his right wits would wish either to visit or be visited upon any other terms? O, if we could but be pleased with his will, we might be pleased from morning to-night, and every day in the year!

Pray for a blessing upon our coming together. It would be a pity to walk ten miles to pick straws, or to come with our empty vessels upon our heads, saying, We have found no water.

I am, &c.

J. NEWTON.

LETTER CCCCVII.

REV. JOB ORTON to REV. T. STEDMAN. Singular causes
for thankfulness.

DEAR DOCTOR,

Feb. 17, 1776.

About the time your last letter arrived, I had, for some particular reasons, been thinking how many mercies I had to be thankful for; and it led me to add largely to the catalogue. — I thank God, that I am not very rich; that I am not a lord, nor a lord's son, nor a lord's chaplain or dependent; that I have no connexion with great people; that I am not a double-chinned doctor, with two or three fat livings or sinecures, living upon the sweat and brains of a poor curate; that I never worshipped a golden calf for preferment and gain, nor made the ministry a spiritual traffic; that I have done what

I could to support, assist, and encourage my poor brethren; that I never was in danger of substituting modes and forms, and externals, for the life and power of religion; but learned from Dr. Doddridge a different judgment, relish, and conduct: that amidst the corruptions of the clergy of your church and ours, there are many upright, pious, zealous divines, who shine as lights in the world, who, though they do not meet with deserved preferment, because they will not desecrate themselves to seek it in the usual way, will make a glorious figure in the church triumphant. Among this number I reckon Dr. Stonehouse, and therefore esteem and honour him, however others neglect him. I know not whether I should wish you a parish in B——, for what good can you hope to do among such a people? I wish you were somewhere, where your labours would be more valued and more successful.

LETTER CCCCVIII.

DR. JOHNSON to MR. BOSWELL, while at Utrecht.

DEAR SIR,

London, Dec. 8, 1763.

You are not to think yourself forgotten, or criminally neglected, that you have had yet no letter from me. I love to see my friends, to hear from them, to talk to them, or to talk of them; but it is not without a considerable effort of resolution that I prevail upon myself to write. I would not, how-

ever, gratify my own indolence by the omission of any important duty, or any office of real kindness.

To tell you that I am or am not well; that I have or have not been in the country; that I drank your health in the room in which we sat last together, and that your acquaintance continue to speak of you with their former kindness, topics with which those letters are commonly filled which are written only for the sake of writing, I seldom shall think worth communicating; but, if I can have it in my power to calm any harassing disquiet, to excite any virtuous desire, to rectify any important opinion, or fortify any generous resolution, you need not doubt but I shall at least wish to prefer the pleasure of gratifying a friend much less esteemed than yourself, before the gloomy calm of idle vacancy. Whether I shall easily arrive at an exact punctuality of correspondence, I cannot tell. I shall, at present, expect that you will receive this in return for two which I have had from you. The first, indeed, gave me an account so hopeless of the state of your mind, that it hardly admitted or deserved an answer; by the second I was much better pleased; and the pleasure will still be increased by such a narrative of the progress of your studies as may evince the continuance of an equal and rational application of your mind to some useful inquiry.

You will, perhaps, wish to ask, what study I would recommend. I shall not speak of theology, because it ought not to be considered as a question, whether you shall endeavour to know the will of God.

I shall, therefore, consider only such studies as we are at liberty to pursue or to neglect; and of these I know not how you will make a better choice, than by studying the civil law, as your father advises, and the ancient languages, as you had determined for yourself: at least, resolve, while you remain in any settled residence, to spend a certain number of hours every day among your books. The dissipation of thought, of which you complain, is nothing more than the vacillation of a mind suspended between different motives, and changing its direction as any motive gains or loses strength. If you can but kindle in your mind any strong desire, if you can but keep predominant any wish for some particular excellence or attainment, the gusts of imagination will break away, without any effect upon your conduct, and commonly without any traces left upon the memory.

There lurks, perhaps, in every human heart a desire of distinction, which inclines every man first to hope, and then to believe, that nature has given him something peculiar to himself. This vanity makes one mind nurse aversions, and another actuate desires, till they rise by art much above their original state of power; and as affection, in time improves to habit, they at last tyrannize over him who at first encouraged them only for show. Every desire is a viper in the bosom, who, while he was chill, was harmless; but, when warmth gave him strength, exerted it in poison. You know a gentleman, who, when first he set his foot in the gay world, as he prepared himself to whirl in the

vortex of pleasure, imagined a total indifference and universal negligence to be the most agreeable concomitants of youth, and the strongest indication of an airy temper, and a quick apprehension. Vacant to every object, and sensible of every impulse, he thought that all appearance of diligence would deduct something from the reputation of genius; and hoped that he should appear to attain, amidst all the ease of carelessness, and the tumult of diversion, that knowledge and those accomplishments which mortals of the common fabric obtain only by mute abstraction and solitary drudgery. He tried this scheme of life awhile, was made weary of it by his sense and his virtue: he then wished to return to his studies; and finding long habits of idleness and pleasure harder to be cured than he expected, still willing to retain his claim to some extraordinary prerogatives, resolved the common consequences of irregularity into an unalterable decree of destiny, and concluded that nature had originally formed him incapable of rational employment.

Let all such fancies, illusive and destructive, be banished henceforward from your thoughts for ever. Resolve and keep your resolution; choose and pursue your choice. If you spend this day in study, you will find yourself still more able to study to-morrow; not that you are to expect that you shall at once obtain a complete victory. Depravity is not very easily overcome,

Resolution will sometimes relax, and diligence will sometimes be interrupted; but let no acci-

dental surprise or deviation, whether short or long, dispose you to despondency. Consider these failings as incident to all mankind. Begin again where you left off, and endeavour to avoid the seducements that prevailed over you before.

This, my dear Boswell, is advice which, perhaps, has been often given you, and given you without effect. But this advice, if you will not take from others, you must take from your own reflections, if you purpose to do the duties of the station to which the bounty of Providence has called you.

Let me have a long letter from you as soon as you can. I hope you continue your journal, and enrich it with many observations upon the country in which you reside. It will be a favour if you can get me any books in the Frisick language, and can inquire how the poor are maintained in the seven provinces.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most affectionate servant,

S. JOHNSON.

LETTER CCCCIX.

DR. JOHNSON to MRS. THRALE. A well deserved rebuke.

The change which the approach of death produces in our views of eternity.

MADAM,

London, March 20, 1784.

Your last letter had something of tenderness. The accounts which you have had of my danger and

distress were, I suppose, not aggravated. I have been confined ten weeks with an asthma and dropsy. But I am now better. God has in his mercy granted me a reprieve; for how much time his mercy must determine.

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Write to me no more about *dying with a grace*. When you feel what I have felt in approaching eternity—in fear of soon hearing the sentence of which there is no revocation—you will know the folly: my wish is, that you may know it sooner. The distance between the grave and the remotest part of human longevity is but a very little; and of that little no path is certain. You know all this, and I thought that I knew it too; but I know it now with a new conviction. May that new conviction not be vain! I am now cheerful. I hope this approach to recovery is a token of the Divine mercy. My friends continue their kindness. I give a dinner to-morrow.

LETTER CCCCX.

DR. E. YOUNG (author of the *Night Thoughts*) to MR. RICHARDSON. In the prospect of speedy dissolution.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Bath, Jan. 3, 1758.

.

I bless God, I at last find benefit from the waters, as to appetite, rest, and spirits. I

have now for three nights had pretty good rest, after two sleepless months ; and I believe that persevering in the waters is a point, at least in my complaint.

But at my time of day, how dare I to complain of small things, on the brink of the grave, and at the door of eternity ! What a mercy that I am still here ! What a fall have I seen around me ! I was here twenty years ago, and scarce find one of the generation alive.

I rejoice, I greatly rejoice, to hear that you are better. Might not Bath be as much your friend as mine ? In some points our cases are similar.

I think you told me, in a letter, that you once found benefit from it : if you could try again, I would attend you to your last hour.

But, say you, are you idle all this time ? No : I am on a great work. How great a work is it to learn to die with safety and comfort ? This is, as it should be, my business, unless I think it too much to spend my superannuated hours on that which ought to have been the business of my whole life.

I am now (as it is high time) *setting my house in order* ; and therefore desire you to send by the carrier the *parcel of sermons* which were packed up when I was in town, that I may commit them to the flames.

And please to favour me with my *full and long debt* to you ; for I am in pain to have it discharged.

That the wing of an indulgent Providence may

be ever stretched over you and yours, is the earnest prayer of,

Dear sir, yours,

E. YOUNG.

LETTER CCCCXI.

DR. YOUNG to MR. RICHARDSON under the same circumstances.

DEAR SIR,

April 30, 1758.

I gratefully accept the kind offer you made me of being under your roof for some days, while I transact an affair in town. I shall be with you on Monday next, God willing; that God willing, who this moment has a thousand agents at work for my sake, of which I know nothing, though they are all within me; and should any one of them cease to work, it would prove my instant death. I mean the animal functions. Yet how merry should I make the world, should they hear me say, "If it please God, I will rise from my seat,"—or, "I will open my mouth;"—or, "If it please God, I will set to paper." So ignorant are our wise ones of God and man.

I am, my dear sir, yours,

E. YOUNG.

LETTER CCCCXI.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. to LADY HESKETH. Character of too many who profess Christianity. Beauty and sublimity of the language of the Scriptures.

MY DEAR COUSIN, Huntingdon, August 1, 1765.

If I was to measure your obligation to write by my own desire to hear from you, I should call you an idle correspondent if a post went by without bringing me a letter, but I am not so unreasonable; on the contrary, I think myself very happy in hearing from you upon your own terms, as you find most convenient. Your short history of my family is a very acceptable part of your letter: if they really interest themselves in my welfare, it is a mark of their great charity for one who has been a disappointment and a vexation to them ever since he has been of consequence to be either. My friend's, the major's behaviour to me, after all he suffered by my abandoning his interest and my own in so miserable a manner, is a noble instance of generosity, and true greatness of mind: and indeed I know no man in whom those qualities are more conspicuous; one need only furnish him with an opportunity to display them, and they are always ready to show themselves in his words and actions, and even in his countenance, at a moment's warning. I have great reason to be thankful—I have lost none of my acquaintance but those whom I determined not to keep. I am sorry this

class is so numerous. What would I not give, that every friend I have in the world were not almost but altogether Christians! My dear cousin, I am half afraid to talk in this style, lest I should seem to indulge in a censorious humour, instead of hoping, as I ought, the best for all men. But what can be said against ocular proof? and what is hope when it is built upon presumption? To use the most holy name in the universe for no purpose, or a bad one, contrary to his own express commandment; to pass the day, and the succeeding days, weeks, and months, and years, without one act of private devotion, one confession of our sins, or one thanksgiving for the numberless blessings we enjoy; to hear the word of God in public with a distracted attention, or with none at all; to absent ourselves voluntarily from the blessed communion, and to live in the total neglect of it, though our Saviour has charged it upon us with an express injunction, are the common and ordinary liberties which the generality of professors allow themselves: and what is this but to live without God in the world? Many causes may be assigned for this antichristian spirit, so prevalent among Christians; but one of the principal I take to be their utter forgetfulness that they have the word of God in their possession.

My friend Sir William Russell was distantly related to a very accomplished man, who, though he never believed the gospel, admired the Scriptures as the sublimest compositions in the world, and read them often. I have been intimate myself

with a man of fine taste, who has confessed to me that, though he could not subscribe to the truth of Christianity itself, yet he never could read St. Luke's account of our Saviour's appearance to the two disciples going to Emmaus, without being wonderfully affected by it; and he thought that if the stamp of divinity was anywhere to be found in Scripture, it was strongly marked and visibly impressed upon that passage. If these men, whose hearts were chilled with the darkness of infidelity, could find such charms in the mere style of the Scripture, what must they find there, whose eye penetrates deeper than the letter, and who firmly believe themselves interested in all the invaluable privileges of the gospel! "He that believeth on me is passed from death unto life," though it be as plain a sentence as words can form, has more beauties in it for such a person than all the labours antiquity can boast of. If my poor man of taste, whom I have just mentioned, had searched a little further, he might have found other parts of the sacred history as strongly marked with the characters of divinity as that he mentioned. The parable of the prodigal son, the most beautiful fiction that ever was invented; our Saviour's speech to his disciples, with which he closes his earthly ministration, full of the sublimest dignity and tenderest affection, surpass every thing that I ever read, and, like the spirit by which they were dictated, fly directly to the heart. If the Scripture did not disdain all affectation of ornament, one should call these, and such as these, the orna-

mental parts of it ; but the matter of it is that upon which it principally stakes its credit with us, and the style, however excellent and peculiar to itself, is only one of those many external evidences by which it recommends itself to our belief.

I shall be very much obliged to you for the book you mention ; you could not have sent me any thing that would have been more welcome, unless you had sent me your own meditations instead of them.

Yours,

W. C.

LETTER CCCCXIII.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. to LADY HESKETH. Remarks on Pearsall's Meditations. Character and effects of faith.

Huntingdon, Aug. 17, 1765.

You told me, my dear cousin, that I need not fear writing too often, and you perceive I take you at your word. At present, however, I shall do little more than thank you for the Meditations, which I admire exceedingly : the author of them manifestly loved the truth with an undissembled affection, had made a great progress in the knowledge of it, and experienced all the happiness that naturally results from that noblest of all attainments. There is one circumstance, which he gives us frequent occasion to observe in him, which I believe will

ever be found in the philosophy of every true Christian. I mean the eminent rank which he assigns to faith among the virtues, as the source and parent of them all. There is nothing more infallibly true than this, and doubtless it is with a view to the purifying and sanctifying nature of a true faith, that our Saviour says, "He that believed in me hath everlasting life," with many other expressions to the same purpose. Considered in this light, no wonder it has the power of salvation ascribed to it! Considered in any other, we must suppose it to operate like an oriental talisman, if it obtains for us the least advantage; which is an affront to him who insists upon our having it, and will on no other terms admit us to his favour. I mention this distinguishing article in his Reflections the rather, because it serves for a solid foundation to the distinction I made in my last, between the specious professor and the true believer, between him whose faith is his Sunday-suit and him who never puts it off at all—a distinction I am a little fearful sometimes of making, because it is a heavy stroke upon the practice of more than half the Christians in the world.

My dear cousin, I told you I read the book with great pleasure, which may be accounted for from its own merit, but perhaps it pleased me the more because you had travelled the same road before me. You know there is such a pleasure as this, which would want great explanation to some folks, being perhaps a mystery to those whose hearts are a

mere muscle, and serve only for the purposes of an even circulation.

W. C.

LETTER CCCCXIV.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. to MRS. COWPER. On the probability of our knowing each other in heaven.

MY DEAR COUSIN,

April 17, 1766.

As in matters unattainable by reason, and unrevealed in the Scripture, it is impossible to argue at all; so, in matters concerning which reason can only give a probable guess, and the Scripture has made no explicit discovery, it is, though not impossible to argue at all, yet impossible to argue to any certain conclusion. This seems to me to be the very case with the point in question—reason is able to form many plausible conjectures concerning the possibility of our knowing each other in a future state; and the Scripture has, here and there, favoured us with an expression that looks at least like a slight intimation of it; but because a conjecture can never amount to a proof, and a slight intimation cannot be construed into a positive assertion, therefore I think we can never come to any absolute conclusion upon the subject. We may indeed reason about the plausibility of our conjectures, and we may discuss, with great industry and shrewdness of argument, those passages in the

Scripture which seem in favour of the opinion ; but still, no certain means having been afforded us, no certain end can be attained ; and after all that can be said, it will still be doubtful whether we shall know each other or not.

As to arguments founded upon human reason only, it would be easy to muster up a much greater number on the affirmative side of the question, than it would be worth my while to write, or yours to read. Let us see therefore what the Scripture says, or seems to say, towards the proof of it ; and of this kind of argument also I shall insert but a few of those which seem to me to be the fairest and clearest for the purpose. For after all, a disputant on either side of this question is in danger of that censure of our blessed Lord's, " Ye do err, not knowing the Scripture, nor the power of God."

As to parables, I know it has been said, in the dispute concerning the intermediate state, that they are not argumentative ; but this having been controverted by very wise and good men, and the parable of Dives and Lazarus having been used by such to prove an intermediate state, I see not why it may not be as fairly used for the proof of any other matter which it seems fairly to imply. In this parable we see that Dives is represented as knowing Lazarus, and Abraham as knowing them both, and the discourse between them is entirely concerning their respective characters, and circumstances upon earth. Here therefore our Saviour seems to countenance the notion of a mutual

knowledge and recollection ; and if a soul that has perished shall know the soul that is saved, surely the heirs of salvation shall know and recollect each other.

In the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, the second chapter, and nineteenth verse, St. Paul says, "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and our joy."

As to the hope which the apostle has formed concerning them, he himself refers the accomplishment of it to the coming of Christ, meaning that then he should receive the recompense of his labours in their behalf; his joy and glory he refers likewise to the same period, both which would result from the sight of such numbers redeemed by the blessing of God upon his ministration, when he should present them before the great Judge, and say, in the words of a greater than himself, "Lo! I, and the children whom thou hast given me." This seems to imply that the apostle should know the converts, and the converts the apostle, at least at the day of judgment; and if then, why not afterwards?

See also that fourth chapter of the Epistle, verses 13, 14, 16, which I have not room to transcribe. Here the apostle comforts them under their affliction for their deceased brethren, exhorting them "not to sorrow as without hope;" and what is the hope by which he teaches them to support their spirits? Even this, "That them which sleep in Jesus shall

God bring with him." In other words, and by a fair paraphrase surely, telling them they are only taken from them for a season, and that they should receive them at their resurrection.

If you can take off the force of these texts, my dear cousin, you will go a great way towards shaking my opinion; if not, I think they must go a great way towards shaking yours.

The reason why I did not send you my opinion of Pearsall was, because I had not then read him; I have read him since, and like him much, especially the latter part of him; but you have whetted my curiosity to see the last letter by tearing it out: unless you can give me a good reason why I should not see it, I shall inquire for the book the first time I go to Cambridge. Perhaps I may be partial to Hervey for the sake of his other writings; but I cannot give Pearsall the preference to him, for I think him one of the most scriptural writers in the world.

Yours,

W. C.

LETTER CCCCXV.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. to MRS. COWPER, on the same subject.

MY DEAR COUSIN,

April 18, 1766.

Having gone as far as I thought needful to justify the opinion of our meeting and knowing each

other hereafter, I find, upon reflection, that I have done but half my business, and that one of the questions you proposed remains entirely unconsidered, viz. "Whether the things of our present state will not be of too low and mean a nature to engage our thoughts, or make a part of our communications in heaven."

The common and ordinary occurrences of life no doubt, and even the ties of kindred, and of all temporal interests, will be entirely discarded from amongst that happy society; and possibly even the remembrance of them done away. But it does not therefore follow that our spiritual concerns, even in this life, will be forgotten; neither do I think that they can ever appear trifling to us in any the most distant period of eternity. God, as you say in reference to the Scripture, will be all in all. But does not that expression mean that, being admitted to so near an approach to our heavenly Father and Redeemer, our whole nature, the soul and all its faculties, will be employed in praising and adoring him? Doubtless however this will be the case; and if so, will it not furnish out a glorious theme of thanksgiving, to recollect "The rock whence we were hewn, and the hole of the pit whence we were digged?" To recollect the time when our faith, which under the tuition and nurture of the Holy Spirit has produced such a plentiful harvest of immortal bliss, was as a grain of mustard-seed, small in itself, promising but little fruit, and producing less? To recollect the various attempts that were made upon it, by the world,

the flesh, and the devil, and its various triumphs over all, by the assistance of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ? At present, whatever our convictions may be of the sinfulness and corruption of our nature, we can make but a very imperfect estimate either of our weakness or our guilt. Then, no doubt, we shall understand the full value of the wonderful salvation wrought out for us: and it seems reasonable to suppose, that, in order to form a just idea of our redemption, we shall be able to form a just one of the danger we have escaped; when we know how weak and frail we were, surely we shall be more able to render due praise and honour to his strength who fought for us; when we know completely the hatefulness of sin in the sight of God, and how deeply we were tainted by it, we shall know how to value the blood by which we were cleansed, as we ought. The twenty-four elders, in the fifth of the Revelations, give glory to God for their redemption out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. This surely implies a retrospect to their respective conditions upon earth, and that each remembered out of what particular kindred and nation he had been redeemed; and if so, then surely the minutest circumstance of their redemption did not escape their memory. They who triumph over the beast, in the fifteenth chapter, sing the song of Moses, the servant of God; and what was that song? A sublime record of Israel's deliverance and the destruction of her enemies in the Red Sea, typical

no doubt of the song which the redeemed in Sion shall sing to celebrate their own salvation, and the defeat of their spiritual enemies. This, again, implies a recollection of the dangers they had before encountered, and the supplies of strength and ardour they had in every emergency received from the great Deliverer out of all. These quotations do not indeed prove that their warfare upon earth includes a part of their converse with each other; but they prove that it is a theme not unworthy to be heard even before the throne of God, and therefore it cannot be unfit for reciprocal communication.

But you doubt whether there is any communication between the blessed at all; neither do I recollect any Scripture that proves it, or that bears any relation to the subject. But reason seems to require it so peremptorily, that a society without social intercourse seems to be a solecism, and a contradiction in terms, and the inhabitants of those regions are called, you know, in Scripture, an innumerable company, and an assembly, which seems to convey the idea of society as clearly as the word itself. Human testimony weighs but little in matters of this sort, but let it have all the weight it can: I know no greater names in divinity than Watts and Doddridge; they were both of this opinion, and I send you the words of the latter:—

“ Our companions in glory may probably assist us by their wise and good observations, when we

come to make the providence of God, here upon earth, under the guidance and direction of our Lord Jesus Christ, the subject of our mutual converse."

Thus, my dear cousin, I have spread out my reasons before you for an opinion which, whether admitted or denied, affects not the state or interest of our soul. May our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, conduct us into his own Jerusalem; where there shall be no night, neither any darkness at all; where we shall be free even from innocent error, and perfect in the light of the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Yours faithfully,

W. C.

LETTER CCCCXVI.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. to MRS. COWPER, on the same subject.

MY DEAR COUSIN, Huntingdon, Sept. 3, 1766.

It is reckoned, you know, a great achievement to silence an opponent in disputation; and your silence was of so long a continuance, that I might well begin to please myself with the apprehension of having accomplished so arduous a matter. To be serious, however, I am not sorry that what I have said concerning our knowledge of each other in a future state, has a little inclined you to the affirmative. For though the redeemed of the Lord shall be sure of being as happy in that state as infinite

power, employed by infinite goodness, can make them, and therefore it may seem immaterial whether we shall, or shall not, recollect each other hereafter, yet our present happiness at least is a little interested in the question. A parent, a friend, a wife, must needs, I think, feel a little heart-ache at the thought of an eternal separation from the objects of her regard; and not to know them, when she meets them in another life, or never to meet them at all, amounts, though not altogether, yet nearly to the same thing. Remember them I think she needs must. To hear that they are happy, will indeed be no small addition to her own felicity; but to see them so, will surely be a greater. Thus at least it appears to our present human apprehension; consequently, therefore, to think that when we leave them, we lose them for ever, that we must remain eternally ignorant whether they that were flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone, partake with us of celestial glory, or are disinherited of their heavenly portion, must shed a dismal gloom over all our present connexions. For my own part, this life is such a momentary thing, and all its interests have so shrunk in my estimation, since by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ I became attentive to the things of another, that, like a worm in the bud of all my friendships and affections, this very thought would eat out the heart of them all, had I a thousand; and were their date to terminate with this life, I think I should have no inclination to cultivate and improve such a fugitive business. Yet friendship is

necessary to happiness here; and built upon Christian principles, upon which only it can stand, is a thing even of religious sanction—for what is that love which the Holy Spirit, speaking by St. John, so much inculcates, but friendship? the only love which deserves the name; a love which can toil, and watch, and deny itself, and go to death for its brother. Worldly friendships are a poor weed compared with this: and even this union of spirit in the bond of peace would suffer, in my mind at least, could I think it were only coeval with our earthly mansions. It may possibly argue great weakness in me, in this instance, to stand so much in need of future hopes to support me in the discharge of present duty. But so it is—I am far, I know, very far from being perfect in Christian love, or any other divine attainment, and am therefore unwilling to forego whatever may help me in my progress.

You are so kind as to inquire after my health, for which reason I must tell you, what otherwise would not be worth mentioning, that I have lately been just enough indisposed to convince me that not only human life in general, but mine in particular, hangs by a slender thread. I am stout enough in appearance, yet a little illness demolishes me. I have had a severe shake, and the building is not so firm as it was. But I bless God for it with all my heart. If the inner man be but strengthened day by day, as, I hope, under the renewing influences of the Holy Ghost it will be, no matter how soon the outward is dissolved. He who has in a

manner raised me from the dead, in a literal sense, has given me the grace, I trust, to be ready at the shortest notice to surrender up to him that life which I have twice received from him. Whether I live or die, I desire it may be to his glory, and it must be to my happiness. I thank God that I have those amongst my kindred to whom I can write without reserve my sentiments upon this subject, as I do to you. A letter upon any other subject is more insipid to me than ever my task was when a schoolboy; and say not this in vain glory, God forbid! but to show you what the Almighty, whose name I am unworthy to mention, has done for me, the chief of sinners. Once he was a terror to me, and his service, oh! what a weariness it was. Now I can say I love him, and his holy name, and I am never so happy as when I speak of his mercies to me.

Yours, dear cousin,

W. C.

LETTER CCCCXVII.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. to REV. W. UNWIN. Observations on religious characters.

MY DEAR WILLIAM,

I say amen, with all my heart, to your observation on religious characters. Men who profess themselves adepts in mathematical knowledge, in

astronomy, or jurisprudence, are generally as well qualified as they would appear. The reason may be, that they are always liable to detection, should they attempt to impose upon mankind, and therefore take care to be what they pretend. In religion alone, a profession is often slightly taken up, and slovenly carried on, because forsooth candour and charity require us to hope the best, and to judge favourably of our neighbour, and because it is easy to deceive the ignorant, who are a great majority, upon this subject. Let a man attach himself to a particular party, contend furiously for what are properly called evangelical doctrines, and enlist himself under the banner of some popular preacher, and the business is done. Behold a Christian! a saint! a phœnix!—In the meantime perhaps his heart, and his temper, and even his conduct, are unsanctified; possibly less exemplary than those of some avowed infidels. No matter—he can talk—he has the shibboleth of the true church—the Bible in his pocket, and a head well stored with notions. But the quiet, humble, modest, and peaceable person, who is in his practice what the other is only in his profession, who hates a noise, and therefore makes none, who knowing the snares that are in the world, keeps himself as much out of it as he can, and never enters it, but when duty calls, and even then with fear and trembling—is the Christian that will always stand highest in the estimation of those, who bring all characters to the test of true wisdom, and judge of the tree by its fruit.

You are desirous of visiting the prisoners; you wish to administer to their necessities, and to give them instruction. This task you will undertake, though you expect to encounter many things in the performance of it, that will give you pain. Now this I can understand—you will not listen to the sensibilities that distress yourself, but to the distresses of others. Therefore, when I meet with one of the specious praters above mentioned, I will send him to Stock, that by your diffidence he may be taught a lesson of modesty; by your generosity, a little feeling for others; and by your general conduct, in short, to chatter less, and to do more.

Yours, my dear friend,

W. C.

LETTER CCCCXVIII.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. to REV. W. UNWIN. Remonstrance on the subject of Sunday routs.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

March 7, 1782.

What a medly are our public prints: half the page filled with the ruin of the country, and the other half filled with the vices and pleasures of it—here an island taken, and there a new comedy—here an empire lost, and there an Italian opera, or a lord's rout on a Sunday!

“ May it please your lordship! I am an Englishman, and must stand or fall with the nation.

Religion, its true palladium, has been stolen away; and it is crumbling into dust. Sin ruins us, the sins of the great especially, and of their sins especially the violation of the sabbath, because it is naturally productive of all the rest. If you wish well to our arms, and would be glad to see the kingdom emerging again from her ruins, pay more respect to an ordinance that deserves the deepest! I do not say pardon this short remonstrance!—The concern I feel for my country, and the interest I have in its prosperity, give me a right to make it. I am, &c.”

Thus one might write to his lordship, and (I suppose) might be as profitably employed in whistling the tune of an old ballad.

Yours, my dear friend,

W. C,

LETTER CCCCXIX.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. to REV. W. UNWIN. Thoughts on divine Providence. Remarkable deliverance from peril.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

May 27, 1782.

We are glad that you are safe at home again. Could we see at one glance of the eye what is passing every day upon all the roads in the kingdom, how many are terrified and hurt, how many plundered and abused, we should indeed find reason enough to be thankful for journeys performed in safety, and for deliverance from dangers we are

not perhaps even permitted to see. When in some of the high southern latitudes and in a dark tempestuous night, a flash of lightning discovered to Captain Cook a vessel, which glanced along close by his side, and which, but for the lightning, he must have run foul of, both the danger, and the transient light that showed it, were undoubtedly designed to convey to him this wholesome instruction, that a particular Providence attended him, and that he was not only preserved from evils, of which he had notice, but from many more of which he had no information, or even the least suspicion. What unlikely contingencies may nevertheless take place! How improbable that two ships should dash against each other, in the midst of the vast Pacific Ocean, and that steering contrary courses, from parts of the world so immensely distant from each other, they should yet move so exactly in a line as to clash, fill, and go to the bottom, in a sea where all the ships in the world might be so dispersed as that none should see another! Yet this must have happened but for the remarkable interference which he has recorded. The same Providence indeed might as easily have conducted them so wide of each other, that they should never have met at all, but then this lesson would have been lost; at least the heroic voyager would have encompassed the globe without having had occasion to relate an incident that so naturally suggests it.

Yours,

W. C.

LETTER CCCCXX.

WILLIAM COWPER, ESQ. to REV. W. UNWIN.

We rejoice that you had a safe journey, and though we should have rejoiced still more had you had no occasion for a physician, we are glad, that, having had need of one, you had the good fortune to find him.—Let us hear soon that his advice has proved effectual, and that you are delivered from all ill symptoms.

This change of wind and weather comforts me, and I should have enjoyed the first fine morning I have seen this month with a peculiar relish, if our new tax-maker had not put me out of temper. I am angry with him, not only for the matter, but for the manner of his proposal. When he lays his impost upon horses, he is jocular, and laughs, though considering that wheels, and miles, and grooms, were taxed before, a graver countenance upon the occasion would have been more decent. But he provoked me still more by reasoning as he does on the justification of the tax upon candles. Some families, he says, will suffer little by it.—Why? because they are so poor, that they cannot afford themselves more than ten pounds in the year. Excellent! They can use but few, therefore they will pay but little, and consequently will be but little burdened; an argument which for its cruelty and effrontery seems worthy of a hero—but he does not avail himself of the whole force of

it, nor with his wisdom had sagacity enough to see that it contains, when pushed to its utmost extent, a free discharge and acquittal of the poor from the payment of any tax at all ; a commodity, being once made too expensive for their pockets, will cost them nothing, for they will not buy it. Rejoice, therefore, O ye pennyless ! the minister will indeed send you to bed in the dark, but your remaining halfpenny will be safe ; instead of being spent in the useless luxury of candlelight, it will buy you a roll for breakfast, which you will eat no doubt with gratitude to the man who so kindly lessens the number of your disbursements, and, while he seems to threaten your money, saves it. I wish he would remember, that the halfpenny, which government imposes, the shopkeeper will swell to two-pence. I wish he would visit the miserable huts of our lace-makers at Olney, and see them working in the winter months, by the light of a farthing candle, from four in the afternoon till midnight : I wish he had laid his tax upon the ten thousand lamps that illuminate the Pantheon, upon the flambeaux that wait upon ten thousand chariots and sedans in an evening, and upon the wax candles that give light to ten thousand card-tables. I wish, in short, that he would consider the pockets of the poor as sacred, and that to tax a people already so necessitous, is but to discourage the little industry that is left among us, by driving the laborious to despair.

A neighbour of mine, in Silver-end, keeps an ass ; the ass lives on the other side of the garden-

wall, and I am writing in the green-house: it happens that he is this morning most musically disposed, whether cheered by the fine weather, or by some new tune which he has just acquired, or by finding his voice more harmonious than usual. It would be cruel to mortify so fine a singer, therefore I do not tell him that he interrupts and hinders me, but I venture to tell you so, and to plead his performance in excuse of my abrupt conclusion.

I send you the goldfinches, with which you will do as you see good. We have an affectionate remembrance of your last visit, and of all our friends at Stock.

Believe me ever yours,

W. C.

LETTER CCCXXI.

MRS. HANNAH MORE to MRS. CARTER. Pride in strange places. Talent without principle.

Bristol, 1784.

How kind and generous is it in you, my dearest Mrs. Carter, to consult my wishes, rather than my deserts, and to give me the pleasure of receiving such a delightful letter from you, so much sooner than I could reasonably hope for it. I hope the speediness of my reply will not make you repent your indulgence. *Faire des heureux*, is one of the highest privileges of our nature; and I assure you that you exercise that prerogative in no low degree, whenever you write to me or talk to me.

The abolition of franks is quite a serious affliction to me ; not that I shall ever regret paying the postage for my friends' letters, but for fear it should restrain them from writing. It is a tax upon the free currency of affection and sentiment, and goes nearer my heart than the cruel decision against literary property did ; for that was only taxing the manufacture, but this the raw material.

I believe I forgot to mention that I had disposed of part of your bounty to the poor woman. Mrs. Palmer, the bookseller, speaks highly of her honesty and sobriety, but says that her pride is so great, that she will let nobody know where she lodges ; and it is but seldom that she can prevail upon her to eat, when she calls upon her, though she knows her at the time to be near perishing. I could not but smile at the absurd notions people entertain of right and wrong ; for this preposterous pride Mrs. Palmer seemed to think a noble *fierté*. However, I have made her condescend to promise that if she should have a dangerous sickness, or be confined to her bed, she would vouchsafe to let me know the place of her abode, that she might not die of want : and yet all this pride pretends to a great deal of religion. Poor creatures ! not to know that humility is the foundation of virtue ; and that pride is as incompatible with piety towards God, as it is with the repose of our own hearts,

I have read the first volume only of *Les Veillées du Château*. What a surprising talent that woman has, of making every thing that passes through her

hands interesting! the barrenest and most unpromising subjects 'she turns to favour and prettiness.' Yet this is the woman with whom, I am told upon unquestionable authority, I must not cultivate a friendship. Can it be possible, my dear friend, that she who labours with so much ability and success in the great vineyard of education, should herself be deficient in the most important qualities which she so skilfully paints, and so powerfully recommends? What motives for humiliation, for self-distrust, and circumspection in one's own conduct does such a character suggest to me! I am never so effectually humbled as in contemplating the defects of a shining character. So far from feeling any interior joy that the distance between them and me seems to be lessened, I am deeply alarmed, lest those of my own actions which seem the least exceptionable, should either proceed from wrong motives, or be a cover for false principles. And I do assure you, my dear Mrs. Carter, with all the truth of sincere friendship, that one of my deepest causes of uneasiness is, lest I should deceive others, and especially myself, as to the motives of my own actions. It is so easy to practise a creditable degree of seeming virtue, and so difficult to purify and direct the affections of the heart, that I feel myself in continual danger of appearing better than I am; and I verily believe it is possible to make one's whole life a display of splendid virtues and agreeable qualities, without ever setting one's foot towards the narrow path, or even one's face towards the strait gate.

I hope we shall not lose Miss Hamilton entirely out of London ; and I long for the decision of that point : but whatever will be most prudent and proper for her, I shall acquiesce in.

Yours, my dear Madam,

Most faithfully,

H. M.

LETTER CCCCXXII.

REV. DR. CAREY to REV. ANDREW FULLER, some time after the fire at Serampore in 1812, at the Missionary Printing-Offices, which, besides destroying much valuable property, consumed the labours of years. An illustration of missionary energy.

Perhaps last year was a year of the greatest afflictions the mission ever suffered ; the ravages made by death were very great, and keenly felt ; but in the midst of them came our loss by fire, and seemed for several months to swallow up every other sensation of distress. At the end of twelve months our printing-office was in a better condition for printing oriental languages than before the fire. Your investment of English type has set us on our legs in that department, and the re-translation of the Scriptures was much better than the former manuscripts, which were burnt, and will save almost as much labour in the revision and correction, as the labour of re-translation is worth. The writing of grammars over again was, I confess, a very unpleasant work, but has been of great use to

me in forwarding the acquisition of some of the most difficult languages, and at the same, as I have had greater and better helps, I think I may say, without vanity, that they are much more complete and free from error than they would have been before.

LETTER CCCCXXIII.

REV. DR. MORRISON, Chinese Missionary, to DR. CLUNIE of Manchester; written only eight days before his death. The catholicity of a true missionary spirit.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Macao, February 24, 1834.

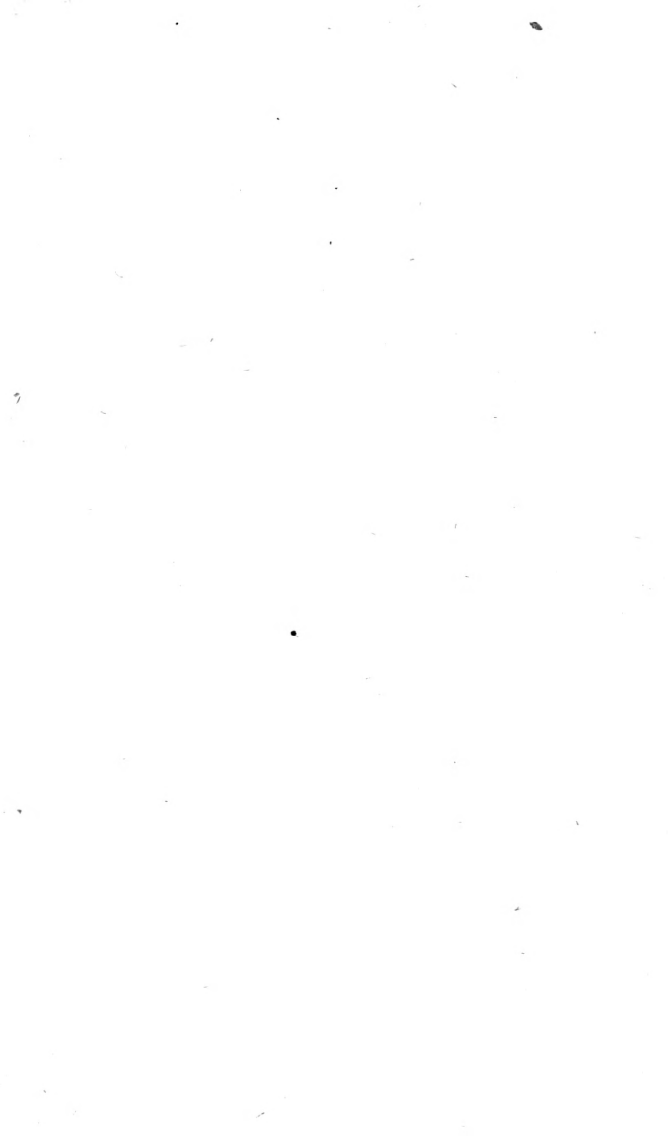
Two days ago, your welcome letter, accompanied by a report of your kind association for our poor college, arrived and afforded me much joy; for I had several months been wondering at your silence. The death of Milne and Collie, and the removal of Kidd and Tomlin, were impediments to the prosperity of the institution. But I am happy to say that, judging from Mr. Evans's letters from the college, he will soon restore it to all that piety, learning, and zeal can do for it. I have been depressed about it of late, but my hopes now revive, The American missionaries in Canton are persevering in the good work, without any immediately great results. They are more zealously supported from America, than we are from England. The church of Christ on earth, and also in heaven, is from all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and

tongues. It should know nothing of earthly nationalities. The kingdom under the whole heaven belongs to Christ, our blessed Saviour, of which I hope, my dear friend, we are citizens. I love the land of my descent, "Canny Scotland;" the land of my birth, "Old England;" and the land of my sojourn—my adoption, although not recognised by it—China. I would not set up one against the other. O that in point of fact, (as in point of right they are,) all the kingdoms of this world may soon become the kingdoms of our God and his Christ! At present I am engaged on notes on the gospels, with marginal references, in Chinese. My progress is but slow. My strength for labour has much diminished; and I have many calls on my time from various quarters. Adieu.

My dear brother and faithful friend, ever yours affectionately,

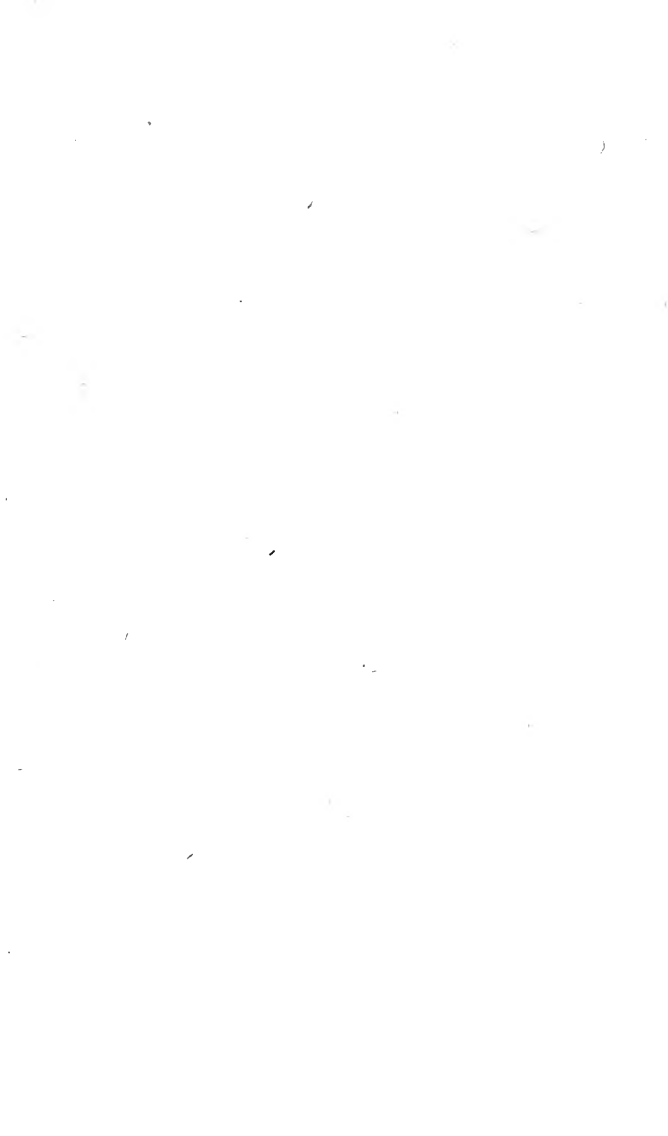
ROBERT MORRISON.

THE END.











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